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MEMOIRS

OF

THE BARONESS D'OBERKIRCH,

COUNTESS DE MONTBRISON.

WRITTEN BY HERSELF,

AND

EDITED BY HER GRANDSON,

THE COUNT DE MONTBRISON.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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8th June.—The countess du Nord was very fond of morning excursions, particularly in my society, as that reminded her of our dear Montbéliard. We went to the Luxembourg to see the picture gallery, which is one of the most beautiful in the world. The palace of the Luxembourg awakens many a thought of the past. We were shown the chambers of Mary de Medicis and of the great Mademoiselle. We remarked as somewhat singular, that this palace has always been the theatre of discord. It witnessed the quarrels of Mary de Medicis and Louis XIII.; of Mdlle. de Montpensier—first with her father, Monsieur, Gaston d'Orleans, afterwards with her mother-in-law, Madame de Lorraine, and her sisters, the other daughters of Monsieur, her equals in rank, though her inferiors in fortune. This palace was afterwards the abode of Madame de Berry, daughter of the regent, who stood in drawn battle against the whole world; and in our own days of the count de Provence, who does not seem to agree very well with anybody. Certain places are in the order of Providence destined for certain things. From the Luxembourg we went to the Jardin du Roi: there had been preparations made to receive their imperial highnesses in the cabinet of natural history and of natural philosophy. We first examined the hothouses and plants. The cabinet of natural history is unrivalled in its collections from the animal, mineral, and vegetable worlds. We saw several interesting experiments on gases, phlogiston, &c. &c.

The extensive information possessed by the count du Nord, is a matter of universal astonishment. Nothing in the arts or sciences seems a mystery to him; he takes an interest in everything, and possesses the happy art of always saying that which is most flattering to the person and the nation. M. d'Aubenton is delighted with the count. The following verses were addressed to him on this occasion. It must be confessed that the Parisians have a passion for rhyming :—

Peter, the Great so justly styled,
  Amongst us once instruction sought;
Lowly in foreign lands he toiled,
  And fame and wisdom thus he bought.
From us he learned then: to-day
The debt his heir doth well repay.

After the visit to the Jardin du Roi, I returned home to dress, that I might go to Versailles, where the queen this evening gave a fancy ball. I had not yet learned to accustom myself to the annoyance of going, in full dress, in a carriage from Paris to Versailles; one could scarcely be more uncomfortable; and the ladies, who several times in the week practise this postilion exercise, ought to be weary of it.

The ball was delightful; there was a profusion of wax-lights and girandoles. The drawing-rooms, which are well known, were dazzling, especially the gallery. The entire court were dressed in their best. The ladies who danced wore white satin dominos, a small hoop, and short train. The count and countess du Nord attracted, as usual, great attention; the one, by his ease of manner and the pointed elegance of his expressions; the other, by her grace and beauty.

The dress of the princess was magnificent. She wore the celebrated chalcedonies, of which so much has been said. They were the most beautiful in Europe. The queen was never weary of admiring them ; and the princesses came alternately to get a close view of them, for they were too dazzling when seen from a distance.

A little incident of this evening served to call forth that refinement of mind and elegance of expression, which had done so much honour to the count du Nord during his residence at Paris. The crowd, anxious to see him, pressed in the direction in which he and the king were advancing to take their seats. The king complained of the pressure ; the count du Nord drew back immediately, saying—

"Sire, pardon me : I am become so French, that I fancy, like the others, that I cannot come too near your majesty."

The queen danced with the grand-duke. Never was any one more graceful or more dignified than our august sovereign. The beauty of her form, and the queen-like grandeur of her bearing, are beyond all praise. I happened at one moment to be behind her and the grand-duchess.

"Madame d'Oberkirch," said the queen, "I pray you to say something in German, that I may know whether I still remember it. I am no longer acquainted with any language but that of my new country."

I said something in German. She remained some moments thoughtful and silent.

"Ah!" said she, at length, "I am indeed charmed to hear this old Teutonic; you speak German like a Saxon, madame—without the Alsatian accent, which astonishes me. What a noble language the German is! but the French, *that* seems to me, from the lips of my children, the softest idiom in the world."

This august princess always loved France dearly, whatever her calumniators may say.

One of the most striking *coup-d'œils* that I have ever seen, is that of the royal family at a ball, when all the court is assembled. There is a gracious majesty in the bearing of the queen, particularly in her *airs de tête*, which is peculiar to herself. The kindness and affability of the king are extreme. Their majesties are followed by Madame Elizabeth, and all the princes and princesses, all attended by their respective suites. The effect is magical, as well by the quantity and splendour of the jewels, as by the gold and silver embroideries, and the richness of the stuffs. Those who have not seen this *tableau vivant* can form no idea of it.

The fête was not prolonged to a late hour; these ceremonious assemblies are not amusing: when all has been *seen*, everybody is anxious to retire. We were the more anxious, on this occasion, to withdraw, as we were to sup with the princess de Lamballe, the superintendent of the queen's household, and the friend of her majesty. This princess is of Savoy-Carignan, married to the son of the duke de Penthièvre, the poor prince de Lamballe, who died so young; she is consequently sister-in-law to the duchess de Chartres. She is beautiful and fascinating, and a model of every virtue; particularly of filial piety towards the father of her unhappy husband, and of devoted affection to the queen. The princess had invited their imperial highnesses by order of her majesty, who wished to pass this evening with them, and to procure them an additional pleasure. The society was not numerous, but very select. After supper we played at lotto, a game at that time much in fashion, and at which a great deal of money was lost. I had the honour of being seated near the countess de Provence; all the royal family were present. After lotto, dancing was introduced; the queen danced a quadrille. This little ball was, beyond comparison, gayer than the former. The king only showed himself for a few minutes, and then retired. When he was gone, pleasure was no longer yoked by deference, and all enjoyed an easy intimacy which the presence of the queen in no way restrained.

We left Versailles to return to Paris at four in the morning. A night passed at a fête seems great dissipation to a person of my quiet habits. I fell asleep in the carriage: the weather was delightful; it was broad day, and the peasants were repairing to their daily labours. What a contrast between their calm, contented faces, and the weary expression of our features; the rouge had fallen from our cheeks,—the powder had been shaken from our hair. The reverse of a fête medal is not beautiful, and is calculated to inspire many philosophic ideas to any one who is willing to reflect. M. d'Oberkirch laughed at me because I complained. He had a very good maxim:—"Those who go through pleasure as a task, and who complain when their work is accomplished, do not deserve to be amused."

I complained much, and was but little amused; the one implies the other.

9th June.—I slept until noon, and if I had not been called, I would have slept much longer. I was to accompany Madame de Beckendorf to the Champ de Mars, to see the French guards go through their exercises. On the previous evening the count du Nord had visited the depôt: he went on foot, and was received by the marshal de Biron, colonel of the French guards. The prince Baratinsky accompanied his imperial highness. The grand-duke passed a very agreeable morning: he visited the pupils who are being trained for the regiment, and tasted their soup. The marshal turned towards the young man who had lent his spoon, and said—

"Preserve the pewter spoon carefully, and remember that the count du Nord has made use of it."

The count du Nord had, the evening before, related all this, which inspired us with a still livelier interest for this noble regiment, which is composed of three thousand picked men. What a splendid *coup-d'œil* they presented! The old marshal marched at their head, commanding and directing them with the vigour of a young man. The Champ de Mars was crowded to excess, the people thronged around, all were so gay, cries of joy, hurras, and shouts of applause re-echoed from all sides. I have never had so close a view of the Parisians, or been so well able to appreciate their character. They drank and sang to their full content, whilst some danced to the sound of music. Their imperial highnesses were much amused. This mode of proceeding did not at all resemble that of our Russians and Germans.

The suite of the count du Nord, and that of the marshal, were most brilliant. The French and

Muscovite gentlemen, all dresssed in their most brilliant costumes, sparkled in the sun. Amongst the spectators were many officers in uniform.

After the various exercises, the count du Nord visited the soldiers in hospital, amongst whom he distributed a considerable sum of money. The solicitude of the marshal de Biron for the poor men was truly paternal. He knew each, called him by name, and inquired minutely into the state of his health. This procedure touched the prince even to tears.

"These are my children," said the marshal; "we have passed many years together: I would like to see them happy, and cannot allow them to want anything when they are ill."

The marshal prayed the countess du Nord and the ladies, as well as the grand-duke and his officers, to partake of a collation at his hôtel, in the rue de Varennes. The table was laid in the garden, which is the largest in Paris, and covered with a profusion of fruits and flowers that embalmed the air. The band of the regiment was concealed in the grove, and played the most melodious airs. After the repast, their imperial highnesses made a circuit of the company, and spoke to all the officers: they afterwards visited the groves, the pavilions, and summer-houses. The countenance of the marshal was beaming with joy.

On returning to their abode, the illustrious travellers sent five hundred louis to the soldiers of the French guard, that they may refresh themselves. This money was accompanied by a little note from the countess du Nord, written with her own hand, and addressed to the marshal de Biron. This note was couched in the most charming words. The marshal kept it as *a trophy*, as he said. After this collation, I called on Madame de Beckendorf, and in the evening visited the Rubens' gallery at the Luxembourg. I have nothing to say about this great painter—all that could be said has been repeated a hundred times.

10*th June.*—I was obliged to rise at the dawn to make my toilette. These full-dress toilettes are terribly wearisome, especially when performed so early in the morning. We were to go to Chantilly to the prince de Condé, and it was necessary to be in time for dinner. This party was, in my opinion, the most agreeable to which we had been yet invited. Chantilly is the most beautiful place in the world—no longer, as in the time of Madame de Sevigné, carpeted with jonquilles, but enchanting, superb. The waters, the woods, the gardens, are delightful. The nymphs of these fountains, leaning on their urns, have a court-like air, and the gravelled walks of the forest are a thousand times more charming than those of a flower-garden. The dinner, with which the ceremonies of the day commenced, was very grand. The princes of the house of Condé have always been distinguished by their chivalrous spirit and the magnificence of their hospitality, and I cannot dwell too strongly on the cause by which they have always won the sympathy of the nobility in a much higher degree than the elder branch, the princes of Orleans. The prince de Condé and the duke de Bourbon have a numerous suite of gentlemen, all deserving of praise for their loyalty and bravery. The persons attached to the Palais Royal are, on the contrary, but little esteemed or respected, and are scarcely received anywhere but at the palace. It is bad company for a young man—it carries, very nearly, the stamp of evil. The count du Nord made many just and profound reflections on this subject. I will not repeat them here ; but they have been often since recalled to my memory by events of which I have been the witness.

The company on that day, consisted of a hundred and fifty persons : the servants were at least three times as numerous, without counting those of the prince's household. On leaving the dinner table, we found a number of carriages all ready at our command. The duke de Bourbon and the prince de Condé themselves drove the ladies through the grounds, beneath triumphal arches, covered with foliage, and ornamented with bands of ribbon, and the ciphers of their imperial highnesses. The weather was beautiful, and our enjoyment was perfect.

At our return we went to the theatre, which was very pretty, and highly ornamented. 'L'Ami de la Maison' was performed. Mdlle. Audinot was bewitching in the part of Agatha. The count du Nord admired her so much, that the princess was a little out of humour with him. I could not help laughing, though very respectfully.

"I should like to see you in the same position, Lanele," said she, "with a husband that every one loves, and envies you for having."

This naïveté made M. d'Oberkirch laugh still more: he was willing to take the fair side of the compliment to himself; and in truth my dear princess did not intend that what she had said should be taken in a different sense.

After 'L'Ami de la Maison,' a piece which had been composed for the occasion was performed. It was a vaudeville by M. Laujeon, secretary to the prince de Condé. The title was 'Le Poète supposé.' M. Champeigne had set it to music. The verses, composed expressly for the fête, were very good, and admirably well sung. The scenery was charming, a natural cascade being introduced; and in the ballet some of the most celebrated dancers performed. All this piece was very well arranged, as was the entire fête. M. Laujeon was presented to the count du Nord, who made him the most flattering compliments. M. Laujeon is the author of 'L'Amoureux de Quinze Ans,' which was performed at Chantilly on the occasion of the marriage of the duke of Bourbon in '70; and of another lively piece, written at the desire of the duchess of Bourbon, who herself performed a rôle, as well as several ladies of her acquaintance. These private theatricals are much in vogue, and are very entertaining.

Before 'L'Ami de la Maison,' some fragments of M. Gluck's 'Iphigenia' had been performed. This opera, beautiful as it is, produced less effect than the small pieces, especially the ballet. After the theatricals, we descended to the gardens, which were brilliantly lighted up and sparkling with fireworks. The façade of the castle represented the escutcheon of the count and countess du Nord, with their ciphers symbolically entwined *en lac d'amour*. This was in the highest degree complimentary.

We supped in the Isle d'Amour, where several gymnastic sports were prepared. After supper the ball recommenced. There prevailed through the entertainments of the day, a gaiety and light-spirited enjoyment that is seldom found at courts.

I have since learned that the queen regretted very much not having been at this fête, but the king would not have allowed her to come. The throne of France is surrounded by a rampart of etiquette that it is difficult to overstep. We are told that it is necessary; that may be, but it is very severe. At the prince de Condé's we all retired at the hour we chose; all the chambers were prepared, there was no hurry, no confusion; the most perfect liberty prevailed in this hereditary mansion of a noble race. So much were we at our ease, that we may have supposed ourselves in the house of a private individual. Everything had been so well arranged, that in the morning no noise was heard that could disturb the guests; everthing was done as if by enchantment, and all was ready in time. The countess du Nord remarked it.

"Ah! madame," replied one of the ladies of the court, "the hospitality of the Condé has been long spoken of in France; it is ineffacably recorded in the history of the country. But what more glorious distinction for this house than that of receiving your imperial highness!"

The countess du Nord looked most beautiful on that evening; and the scene that surrounded her seemed worthy of her presence.

11*th June.*—We went, after breakfast, each when and how we pleased, to see the cabinet of natural history. This had been a favourite study of the duke, father of the present prince de Condé—he who was minister under the regency. The present prince de Condé is a man of talent, tact, and of exquisite refinement of sentiment. He does not like philosophers, and has never joined in the general admiration for these gentlemen who have caused and will yet cause us so much evil. He does not allow himself to be dazzled by a celebrity which is often ill-founded.

"I prefer," he used often to say, "an honest man to a witty one."

He frequently gave what he called military dinners: he loved to be surrounded with all that could recall or prognosticate the glory of France, and the memory of his ancestors. He is most amiable, and receives everybody with affability, without for a moment compromising his own dignity. He is one of the bravest princes in Europe, and in case of war, the king would find in his sword no mean support; valour is, indeed, a hereditary virtue in this hero-race, and the duke de Bourbon, and the duke d'Enghien, will not degenerate from their ancestors. The prince de Condé is very well informed, and possesses varied literary knowledge—much more than he generally gets credit for. He has read a great deal, all of which he remembers and understands. He conversed for a long time with the count du Nord, who is so profoundly learned, and who was astonished at the extensive information possessed by a prince, apparently engrossed by military affairs. The apartments of Chantilly are ornamented with superb pictures, representing war scenes, in which the glory of the house of Condé has been achieved. It is a magnificent collection of the most remarkable battles. The great Condé is to be seen everywhere. He is one of the favourite historical characters of the grand-duke, who spoke of him during the entire morning. We could scarcely tear ourselves from apartments of which the decorations were so truly grand; and when we did leave we returned repeatedly, always accompanied by Mdlle. de Condé, who remained constantly with the countess du Nord. This lady is worthy of her ancestry. She is one of those persons, the qualities of whose heart and mind place them so far above others, that the highest rank could add nothing to their personal worth. Had Mdlle. de Condé been born in a cottage, she would have been a distinguished person, and would not have resembled the peasants around; her mind would have raised her above her position. She is beautiful, but hers is a commanding beauty; there is power and strength even in her smile, and yet she is endowed with great tenderness of heart. And her noble brow, fit to bear a crown, or to be shaded by the veil of a *religieuse.* She was at that time twenty-five years of age, and had remained in the convent until she was twenty-three: thus her piety was angelic. She preserved at all times a serenity of soul and aspect which is only accorded to a creature privileged by God. She was a good musician, had a fine voice, and played very agreeably on the harpsichord: she even understood composition. She painted in several styles, and wrote very good verses.

One evening, in a small circle of friends, assembled at the duchess of Bourbon's, where all were amusing themselves in writing verses to certain given rhymes, the words "ear," "guides," "fear," "flies," were given to Mdlle. de Condé, and almost without hesitation she wrote the following verses. I copied them from the original, which the duchess de Bourbon kept:—

Never shall a lover's sigh invade mine ear;
Too much that passion's dangerous power I fear.
I'll shun the winged god that folly guides,
E'en as the trembling dove the falcon flies.

The countess du Nord did me the honour of telling me, that next to the queen, Mdlle. de Condé was she of all the princesses that she liked the best, and whom she would have most wished to make her friend. I can easily believe that.

After a dinner of as great elegance as that of the preceding day, we drove in open carriages through the park, after which there was a hunt for those who wished to share in such amusement. Night being now come, every leaf seemed to put forth a brilliant little lamp. Several balls were improvisatrised, so to speak, upon the green sward or within the tents. The supper was served, at the hamlet: this was a picturesque assemblage of rustic buildings, in the midst of gardens à l'Anglaise. The interior of the largest of the cabins was hung with foliage, and the exterior was surrounded with everything necessary for a comfortable labourer. It was in this cottage, which consists of a single oval-shaped room, that supper was laid upon a dozen small tables, each having covers for ten or twelve persons. All was agreeable, gay, without ceremony, and perfectly well arranged.

We were very much attracted at Chantilly by a statue representing a constable de Montmorency. It is from the family of Montmorency that Chantilly has passed into that of Condé; but it was very different formerly from what it is now. The duke in the time of the regency expended millions on it, not to mention all that the great Condé and his son disembursed for the same purpose. The duke de Bourbon gained so much by the system, that it was said that he had turned the Pactolus into Chantilly.

We went after dinner to eat fruit in a pavilion, situated in the midst of the woods, and which we had not yet seen. This pavilion is a single isolated rotunda, within the arched roof of which places were prepared for the musicians, but so arranged that they were quite concealed; so that, reclining on a sofa in the hall, one heard music from above, without perceiving whence it came. All that produced the most charming illusion; one would almost fancy that it was angels who sung.

The youngest and most beautiful women of Paris, and the most accomplished gentlemen, were at this fête, which could not have been so brilliant in any other spot on earth. The menagerie is more numerous and better taken care of than that of the king; and as to the stables, everybody knows that a carriage and four may be driven through them.

After the music there was a promenade, and in the evening a hunt by torchlight. This was an enchanting sight: all the ladies were in open carriages, the princesses together, whilst the gentlemen galloped beside. The stags ran terrified by the light of the torches, the pack followed barking: the effect that this produced in such scenery was fairy-like. The countess du Nord was enchanted. At the moment when she was stepping into her carriage, the duke d'Enghien, a beautiful child of ten years of age, who then announced all that he has since become, presented her an immense bouquet of the most beautiful and odoriferous flowers. She felt this act of attention very deeply: she was passionately fond of flowers—a sentiment which it was difficult to gratify at St. Petersburg.

One day that I asked her whether she had any *maisons de plaisance,* she replied, "I am obliged to do without, or at least to restrict myself to a few. The empress has exquisite flowers, so have many of the great nobles. I would like to have them everywhere about me, as we had at our dear Etupes; but that would cost extravagant sums, which I prefer giving to poor mothers and children who are in want. I assure you that makes me much more happy."

The kind heart of this dear princess revealed itself in her every word and act.

The duke de Bourbon was at that time twenty-six years of age: he had a *belle tournure,* and his complexion was remarkably brilliant. The prince de Condé, forty-six years of age, was young and vigorous as he. Both appeared mounted as the chief *écuyers* of France: it was delightful to see them at the hunt. This royal sport has always been keenly enjoyed by the princes of the house of Condé. I can easily comprehend it, after having seen their forests, their equipages, and all their hunting train—sufficient indeed to inspire the most timid with courage.

After supper all did as they pleased; some remained in the park until a very late hour; I went to bed. These wondrous scenes had fatigued me horribly. I slept, lulled by the sound of distant music, and of the trumpet sounds which still reechoed in the woods. Our abode at Chantilly was a real pleasure.

12*th June.*—The chase recommenced in the park at the break of day; several persons who were engaged in it had not gone to bed at all,—amongst others the duke de Bourbon. The stag gave a chase of three hours, swam across the canal, followed by the entire pack. The *coup-d'œil* was superb, and the hunters were enchanted. The honours, as a matter of course, were for the duchess du Nord. The prince de Condé presented her the four teeth and the antlers of the stag. She got the teeth set in girandolas, mounted in diamonds. It was odd, though pretty enough: but the recollections they awakened were dear to the princess.

After the hunt we dined in the hamlet, and in the same style as in the preceding days: we walked through the grounds; we wished to behold these delightful places again. I remember that there was in the Isle d'Amour a statue of a child holding in his hand a burning heart. At the base were the following verses, which I copied because I thought them pretty :—

A heart on beauty's shrine to lay,
  Nude, like Truth—deceit I shun;
Unarmed, like Innocence, I stay
  Wingless and constant but to one.
Such was Love in days of yore;
Still he's sought, but found no more.

The prince de Condé, who received the count du Nord in a style so magnificent, conceived for the prince a sincere friendship, to which the latter corresponded with all his heart. Noble characters quickly sympathize. When, after our promenade, the count and countess du Nord took leave of their hosts, it was with real regret on both sides.

"We will be very far asunder," said the prince de Condé; "but if your imperial highness has no objection, and the king permits it, I may be one day able to return you the visit at St. Petersburg, with which you have deigned to honour me."

"We would receive you with enthusiasm, prince, and the empress would be only too happy to see you in our wild country."

"Alas! these are dreams," replied the prince de Condé, sighing.

The fact is, that princes often feel that their high rank is but a splendid slavery. Chains are not less burdensome because the links are of gold.

CHAPTER II.

Conversation at the countess du Nord's—On the royal family—About some persons at court—M. de Maurepas—The marshal de Luxembourg's wife — Dinner and supper guests—Visit to the duchess de Polignac—Her connexion with the queen—Visits to celebrated houses M. Beaujon—Strange life of a financier— '*Les Berceuses*' —M. de la Reynière—Le Sieur Clérisseau—His impertinence to the count du Nord—Tact of the prince – The marchioness de la Rivière—A new Lycurgus—The duke d'Aumont—The marchioness de la Ferté Jubault—M. de Barigny—Madame Geoffrin—Castor and Pollux—Company at the duchess de Chartres—Madame de Mackan—Madame de Beckendorf falls ill—I take her place—The queen and the countess du Nord at Marly—Sèvres, magnificent presents — The countess du Nord at the 'Bal d'opéra'—The Parliament—M. de Demesson—The princess de Marsan—Verses on the princess de Piedmont—Adieux—Departure—Verses—Triple nonsense—Success of the august travellers—Remark of the count du Nord.

13th June.—We were all in need of rest; however, I rose early to get my hair dressed in the most fashionable style. The countess du Nord had made me promise that I would: she said that my short frizzed curls made me look exactly like Madame Hendel, our old amusement at Montbéliard. I felt very little inclination to change the fashion of my head-dress, but I could not refuse the entreaties of the grand-duchess. I was rewarded, however, for my compliance, by the compliments of all my friends, who said I looked infinitely better thus; and when I went to dine with his imperial highness, she ran to embrace me with a cry of joy, saying that I was again myself, her own Lanele. After we had laughed sufficiently we went to table, where the conversation was entirely about the fêtes of the preceding day. All were unanimous in their admiration of the splendour and magnificence of the entertainments. Somebody told an observation which was already current through all Paris, and which was very true.

"The king received the count du Nord like a friend, the duke of Orleans like a citizen, and the prince de Condé like an emperor."

"That is quite true," said the count du Nord. "The hospitality of the house of Condé cannot be too highly praised; no monarch could exceed it, were it only on account of his beautiful place of Chantilly, which it would be impossible to excel."

The grand-duke had expressed the evening before almost the very same opinion to the prince de Condé in these words:

"Ah! monsieur, I would give all that I possess in exchange for your beautiful Chantilly."

"The loss would be entirely on your side, monsieur."

"No," quickly replied the count du Nord, "because I should then be a Bourbon and a Condé."

Our conversation then turned on the royal family, and their remarkable affection for each other, on the court, and on the principal persons who composed it. The king has the greatest confidence in his aunt, Madame Adelaide, who gives him excellent advice on public affairs, which he always religiously follows. But no person could give him better advice, if he needed it, than the queen Marie Antoinette, whose clear understanding, and attachment to his majesty, give her the highest claim on his confidence. The count de Provence and the count of Artois are both distinguished men ; the former possesses a vast fund of deep and varied learning, whilst the latter has all the grace, goodness, and wit of his ancestor, Henry IV.

It is a touching sight to see the three brothers and their wives walking together in the park at Versailles or Trianon. The hopes of France are centred in them. May God preserve them long !

Amongst the remarkable persons of the court were mentioned M. and Madame de Maurepas, Philemon and Baucis, the most united pair in the world. M. de Maurepas is a most excellent husband, although the most thoughtless man possible ; he has not a single serious idea, except where his wife is concerned. When he was minister of state, he would treat the most important affairs as trifles, at the same time that a tear of Madame Maurepas would make him sad for months. It is a strange combination. They are both very old, and most certainly will die together; one could not survive the other.

Our next subject was Messieurs de Miromesnil, de Puy-Segur, the duke de Coigny, and several others. Then the marchioness of Ossun, *née* Hocquart de Montferneuil, the countess of Chalons, *née* d'Andlau (her mother was a Polastron cousin of the Polignacs), who was one of the most elegant and beautiful women of the court; and last, the marchioness of Luxembourg, who was sovereign arbiter of the wit, beauty, and reputation of the ladies of the court: and she who needed indulgence so much in her own youth, was become the most severe in her condemnation of the weakness of others. Her house is an Areopagus, and from her decrees there is no appeal; they are universally submitted to. She had been Mdlle. de Villeroy, and by her first marriage duchess de Boufflers. She was celebrated for her intrigues *du cœur* in the reign of Louis XV., a time when it was difficult to excel in such celebrity. The most severe lampoons were written against her in verse, and are still very commonly sung by the humbler classes; but she seems to think that, in changing her name, they no longer apply to her. One morning I heard a groom singing one of these as he cleaned his horses in the court-yard. It began thus:—

> Quand Boufflers parut à la cour,
> Des amours on crut voir la mère, &c.

She was not a woman of much information, but possessed a great deal of wit of a very refined character. She was pedantic (if I may use the expression) in her affectation of refinement in language and strict etiquette, on which she would dilate in the most specious and amusing manner. She would condemn a person to banishment for a single word, and no entreaties would induce her to revoke her decree. She was deservedly merciless towards conceited or impertinent people; thus would be banished from every fashionable supper-table (where only agreeable persons were wished for), any one who had the misfortune to be condemned by the marchioness's unquestioned fiat. She was always surrounded by the most agreeable society; every young man paid her his court, for it was necessary to be in her good graces to make a distinguished marriage, and no bride would risk her presentation at court without first visiting the marchioness: she was an undoubted authority.

In Paris there are two kinds of guests—those who are invited to dine, and those invited to sup. Those for dinner (if not very intimate friends) are almost always persons that one is obliged to ask—old, serious, and often very tiresome. But supper is a very different thing: there the guests must possess qualities that are not so easily met with, and the most indispensable of all is wit. Without wit, elegance, knowledge of society, and the thousand nothings that compose fashionable existence, one should not dream of being admitted to these charming assemblies. There alone is conversation—conversation the most difficult to support, being always on the most trifling subjects, which require the adornment of intellect and graceful expression to give them currency. It is a breath that passes away and leaves no trace, but whose odour is delightful whilst it lasts. The countess tells me in her letters that what she regretted most in leaving the Parisians was their inimitable talent for conversation. All intelligent foreigners say the same.

After this dinner, where the conversation was excellent—although it was a dinner—I paid several visits. One to the duchess of Polignac, the intimate friend of her majesty, and sister-in-law to the countess Diana, whom I mentioned before. Her first title was countess Jules; but her husband was made hereditary duke in 1780 (he was nephew to the marquis of Polignac, master of the horse to the count of Artois, in which office he has been succeeded by the present marquis, who holds the office at the time I write). Madame de Polignac has since been appointed governess to the royal children. The queen was so deeply attached to her, that when she was confined to Passy by the birth of one of her children, her majesty took up her residence near her, that she might see the duchess more frequently, and with less ceremony. The year before, when the king went to Fontainebleau to hunt, her majesty, profiting of his absence, made several visits to her friend, then at Clayes; thus travelling twenty leagues in a single day. No subject was ever so beloved by her sovereign. All the courtiers were jealous of her.

This favourite of a queen is small and ill-made; and, though perfectly straight, walks badly and ungracefully: but her face is beautiful, except the forehead, which is brown, and of a disagreeable shape. The expression of her countenance is most charming, ingenuous, mild, and candid. She has a most enchanting smile. Uninfluenced by the favour she enjoys, her manners are as simple and natural as possible; and her serene aspect speaks the calmness of a good conscience, which is not always the accompaniment of a sensibility so lively as hers.

"Whilst I am with her," said her majesty, "I am no longer a queen; I feel that I am myself."

I remained a long time with this lady. I very much admire her intellectual powers, of which she does not make the least display—which gives an opportunity for envy to say that she is dull. She must be calumniated, as a compensation for the distinction she is shown. I supped with Madame Beckendorf, who was becoming more and more delicate every day, and quite agitated at the idea of the long journey before her. She requested me to apologise to the countess du Nord, if she should not be able to go to her next day. She really could not leave her house.

14*th June.*—I accompanied the grand-duchess in her visits to several houses, celebrated for the richness and elegance of their decorations. We spent some hours looking at all these fine things, but I had so severe a headache that I could not pay sufficient attention. Our first visit was to M. de Beaujon, the court banker, whose house displayed all the luxury and magnificence of one who had a bank to bear the expenses of his household. The splendour of princes could not equal his, if it were not in the fact of theirs being more solid.

This residence, which M. de Beaujon calls his "hermitage," is built in the centre of extensive grounds, situated near the Champs Elysée. The gardens are laid out *à l'Anglaise;* he has there a menagerie, a dairy, and even a chapel. The house is magnificently furnished. We were shown a mahogany dining-table that would accommodate thirty persons; and a staircase entirely built of the same wood. I should never end, if I were to particularize the pictures, statues, and other curiosities that we saw. The library is celebrated; it contains the rarest editions of the rarest works. All the princes of the royal family have presented their portraits to M. de Beaujon: why, I do not know. The drawing-rooms were not large, but were splendid in their decorations, even to the smallest details.

It was said that this banker led a most singular life. His health was delicate, and he was forbidden to eat anything but a kind of milk pottage without sugar. He gave the most splendid dinners, of which he saw his guests partake, without daring to taste a morsel himself, though often tempted by the odour of dishes worthy of an epicure. He was surrounded by the most beautiful women in Paris, but all gallantry was forbidden him; violent emotion would be death. Every evening his house was filled with the most joyous company; the most exquisite suppers were prepared; wit and gourmandism reigned supreme: whilst the master and provider of all was stretched, sleepless, on a bed of pain. His lady guests visited him, to soothe his sufferings by their conversation, and lull him to rest with the harmony of their songs : which occupation obtained for them the soubriquet of *berceuses* to M. de Beaujon. He was an excellent man, and employed his fortune in good works.

The residence of M. de la Reynière is in the Rue St. Honoré, and has an entrance in the Champs Elysée. This house is said to be the best inn for people of quality, who all seek for invitations to it, though affecting not to value them. M. de la Reynière is a real gourmand, thinking of nothing but what he eats, and of how he should obtain the first of every delicacy. He is laughed at by everybody, whilst they eat the good things he sets before them. He admires and encourages the fine arts, not perhaps like a man of enlightened taste, but from a goodness of heart, which makes him desire to be useful, and to help those who are in need. Madame de la Reynière is a very beautiful woman, who, though she always says that she is dying, does the honours of her house with great dignity. The ladies of the court are all jealous of her ; not alone on account of her beauty, and of her success in society, but also for the luxury and elegance with which she is surrounded. It would be impossible to imagine the beauty of this house, so récherchée and so coquettish. It contains curiosities of every kind, of which we did not see half, although we spent two hours there.

As we entered the dining-room, a man advanced towards the count du Nord, and saluted him; he was Sieur Clérisseau, architect to the empress of Russia, and member of the academy at St. Petersburg. The prince returned his salutation with his usual politeness, and was passing on, when this man stepped before him.

"What do you wish to say to me, sir?" said the count du Nord, stopping.

"You do not remember me, monseigneur?"

"I remember you perfectly well, you are Sieur Clérisseau."

"Why do you not speak to me, then?"

We all thought the man was mad. The count du Nord, shrugging his shoulders, replied:

"Because I have nothing to say to you."

"And are you going to act here as you did in your own house, to affect not to know me, and treat me like a stranger—I who am architect to the empress, and who am in constant correspondence with her? I wrote to your august mother yesterday to complain of the unworthy reception I received from you."

Everybody was stunned; and the count du Nord, after a moment's hesitation, pushing Clérisseau gently aside, said:

"Write also to my mother that you have stopped up my path, and she will most certainly thank you."

This disagreeable scene I would gladly have passed over in silence, but that it is very generally known and has been already printed by another; it was very painful to us all, but particularly to M. and Madame de la Reynière, who had permitted this man to meet his imperial highness. He had waited on the count du Nord, inflated with vanity, and was very much hurt at being received politely and nothing more. He was deeply wounded by the conduct of the grand-duke, and as a compensation was determined to address him publicly. The prince punished him in the very best manner, by treating him with indifference. His imperial highness has great tact, and a perfect command of himself; he never shows himself offended by the most disagreeable truth, but conducts himself in a manner that adds additional lustre to his character.

One day he heard some person near him in a crowd say that he was very ugly, which, however, is not the case; he turned to the Russian ambassador and said—

"Though the French may be very polite, it cannot be denied they are also very candid."

The countess du Nord was annoyed by this, but the count spoke of it so gaily, and like a man who knew his own value, that she was soon consoled. Our next visit was to the house of the marchioness de la Rivière, *née* de Rozet de Recozel de Fleury.

Her husband died in 1778. Her nephew, the marquis de Fleury, married in 1784 the daughter of the count de Coigny, gentleman in waiting to Madame Elizabeth, and he became duke at the death of his grandfather in 1788. This house is not as sumptuous as the others, but it is prettier and in better taste perhaps. The woman of quality speaks in everything from the greatest to the least. Money alone has not done everything.

This family, de la Rivière, must not be confounded with that of M. Mercier de la Rivière, a celebrated writer whom the czarina had invited to Russia. He was a very vain man, and flattered himself that he would play the part of prince Potemkin, and become prime minister. He did not conceal this expectation when he arrived at St. Petersburg, but with astonishing *naïveté* told it to everybody. He was mistaken, the only part he acted was that of a fool, notwithstanding his genius. He had been counsellor of parliament in Paris in 1747, and afterwards governor of Martinique; and he did not expect to find the Russians superior to the negroes, and was greatly disappointed at their civilization. The empress consoled his wounded ambition by her generosity; and he returned to France with a great deal of money and presents, and quite willing to admit that the northern savages were not so bad after all.

We found all the servants of the duke d'Aumont ranged under the vestibule of his palace, and in mourning for the old duke who had died the April before. The present duke is by hereditary right first gentleman of the chamber. It is said of him that his watch is always slow; he is an excellent man, but slow and of an undecided character, which has passed into a proverb. His father was a man of most original ideas, and very slovenly in his person. It was he who said one day as he looked in a mirror—

"D'Aumont, God has made you a gentleman; the king has made you a duke; now do something for yourself, by shaving your beard."

The wags of the day told a very amusing story of the duchess d'Aumont, but which I will not repeat: it may be found in one of Molière's comedies.

All this, however, did not prevent the hotel d'Aumont from being very richly and handsomely furnished.

We next visited the marchioness de Laferté Jubault, daughter of the celebrated Madame Geoffrin. She was married to the grandson of Marshal de Laferté d'Etampes, and has been under-governess to the royal children. It was she who educated Madame Elizabeth. She was left a widow at twenty-one, when renouncing all idea of a second marriage she devoted her time to the study of science and the fine arts. Her house was the rendezvous of wit and genius, and although seventy years of age she was herself lively and intellectual. Her ideas were not at all the same as her mother's; she detested our modern philosophy, for which I cannot blame her. We met at her house, where he resides, M. de Barigny, member of the Academy of Inscriptions, a charming old man, who though ninety years of age, was not at all infirm; his conversation was most interesting. His treatise on 'The Authority of the Popes' is very much esteemed. He had also been the friend of Madame Geoffrin, together with baron Holbach, Marmontel, Helvetius, Raynal, d'Alembert, and all that clique.

Madame Geoffrin used never to go out, and had every evening at her house the most select society, ladies as well as gentlemen, of course always excepting these unfortunate philosophers. She had been quite the fashion under Louis XV.: she went to Poland to visit King Poniatowsky, to whom she had been of great service when he was a simple gentleman, and for which he was grateful, which is very rare, particularly at court.

After all these visits we dined with the countess du Nord, and after dinner I went to the opera to hear 'Castor and Pollux:' it is a musical *chef* *d'œuvre*, and has immortalized Rameau. It was performed by command of the grand-duke and duchess: they were delighted with it. Mdlle. Girardin was deservedly very much applauded. The stage decorations were really magnificent, the ballets delightful, and accompanied by the most enchanting melody: nothing was wanting that could please the eye or charm the ear.

The public complained, and still complain, that the opera-house is too short; which is a fact, and it quite destroys the illusion of the Elysian fields in 'Castor and Pollux.' It was proposed that the theatre should be lengthened in the direction of the Rue Bondy. I do not know whether it has been, or will be done.

After the opera, I went with Madame de Polignac to pay my respects to the duchess de Chartres. There was company; but they all seemed infected by the low spirits of the duchess.

15*th June*.—I went to Versailles to visit Madame Mackan: she scarcely ever left it. I remained with her the entire day, talking of various things; she was so well acquainted with everything that occurred at court, and knew so well the secret springs that moved its machinery. It was one in the morning when we got home. All this going about was very fatiguing; and though M. d'Oberkirch bore it with the greatest good humour, his health did not withstand its effects so well as mine.

16*th June.*—I went early to see the countess du Nord, whom I found very anxious about Madame Beckendorf's health. The doctors declared that she could not accompany the grand-duchess on her journey without risking her life or that of her child. This was a great disappointment to the princess, who could not think of exposing the poor lady to such a danger, and yet she would be quite desolate without a friend.

" Lane," said she, looking at me steadily, " would you come with me ?"

I was very much surprised, and hesitated for a moment.

" You would do a great service to this poor Beckendorf," said she : " she would be in desolation at my loneliness. Perhaps you would even save the life of her child ; for I should not be surprised if she set out in defiance of the doctors, rather than leave me without a friend. Ah ! tell me, will you come ?"

" Would your imperial highness keep me long ?"

" Three months at most, including the time that we would remain with my family. Only think, Lane, that when we part now we may never meet again, unless you would come to

St. Petersburg, which you do not seem inclined to do."

"Dear princess, dispose of me as you please; I will willingly defer, for your sake, the pleasure of seeing my daughter: but I do not know whether M. d'Oberkirch will consent."

"The rude tyrant," cried the princess, laughing, "I will speak to him: he must consent."

"In that case I will be delighted."

"You are very sure?"

"Can your highness doubt it?"

"Very well then, do a good work in dining with my poor Beckendorf when you return from Marly, and calm her despair by telling her that I shall not go alone, which she will think a consolation for all her troubles."

I was at once happy and sad,—delighted with my expected journey, but sad at the idea of leaving M. d'Oberkirch, who would see my child before I should. I was rather thoughtful during our drive to Marly. The fountains played; but the chateau did not shine with the same *éclat* that it did under Louis XIV. It was beautiful, but not equal to Versailles, although it cost nearly as much money. There is a large lawn, surrounded with verdant porticoes, and a mirror in the centre. At one end there is a large square pavilion, in which there are apartments for the king and royal family, and six other pavilions, on either side of the porticoes, for the persons of the court, or the invited guests. The architecture of these pavilions is certainly very fine, but I can well understand the definition of a courtier who compared Marly to a backgammon board, on which the dice were thrown by chance. These square pavilions do, indeed, resemble dice. The fountains are very good, but not as handsome as those at Versailles: they played all day.

I heard the countess du Nord speaking to the queen of a visit that she had made with the grand-duke to the china manufactures of Sèvres, a visit that gave her another opportunity of admiring the inimitable grace with which our sovereign performs everything that she undertakes. The august pair bought three hundred thousand livres' worth of porcelain. After their purchase was completed they were shown a toilet-table of blue porcelain, ornamented with paintings and scrolls in enamel, that had all the appearance of pearls and precious stones. Under the mirror were two Cupids playing at the feet of three Graces, which formed the pedestal. The princess admired this exquisite production very much, and said:

"How beautiful it is! I suppose that it is for the queen?"

"Madame," said the count of Angevilliers, "the queen offers it to the countess du Nord, and hopes she will admire it, and keep it in remembrance."

"Ah! yes indeed," said the grand-duchess, "here are our arms enamelled. The queen is too amiable. I will thank her myself for this magnificent present."

At the same time the count du Nord had been presented, on the part of the king, with a service of china, and some beautiful vases, on all of which his arms were displayed. They were marvellously beautiful. His imperial highness was greatly afraid that these magnificent gifts may be broken on their route to Russia, and gave the most particular orders about them.

The same day she visited the prisons, and with her husband went into every cell, to see personally how the prisoners were treated, and to give them money. In the different prisons that they visited, they distributed more than eighteen thousand francs. They were universally blessed.

After visiting every part of Marly, we returned to Paris, and in obedience to my dear princess, I went to dine with Madame Beckendorf, to whom I announced the good news, always with the reservation of M. d'Oberkirch's approval. I would not positively engage myself until this formality had been fulfilled according to the expression of the count du Nord. The poor Madame Beckendorf was delighted to hear that the countess would not be left entirely to her two Russian ladies, with whom she was never very friendly, and that she herself could go by short stages to await the arrival of the grand-duchess at Montbéliard. M. d'Oberkirch consented without hesitation.

"Madame," said he, in reply to the demand of the princess, "Madame d'Oberkirch is her own mistress, and we are both only too much honoured by a demand that we will obey with pleasure."

"Did not I say so?" said the princess, laughingly.

I was delighted. Immediately after the affair was decided on, his imperial highness, in the most affectionate and amiable manner, told it to everybody, desiring them to congratulate her. She took me with her to see 'Castor and Pollux' again, so great was her admiration for it. After the opera we dressed in haste, and returned to the masked ball, which the princess was anxious to see once more before leaving Paris. She walked about a great deal more than at her first visit, listening to the conversations, and laughing at the amusing things she heard. She was often addressed, by persons attracted by her beautiful figure, which the domino could not entirely conceal. She entered into conversation with a man bearing a pot of flowers, and who refused to let her pluck one, saying he was certain that she was ugly. At first we felt little pleasure in this dialogue, when this man suddenly asked the princess how old she was, in so strange and comic a voice, that it made us laugh for nearly a quarter of an hour. We remained very late. The august travellers were recognized: they were followed and complimented; this became tiresome, and we went home.

17*th.*—I went to the countess du Nord to accompany her *au Parlement.* It was a very imposing ceremony. Two of the members were deputed to receive their imperial highnesses, which they did, paying them some compliment, and curtsying like women, which nearly overcame the grand-duchess's gravity: she had never seen such a thing before. The members of the '*Grande Chambre*' wore red robes, and were presided over by M. de Demesson. Places had been reserved for the grand-duke and duchess, and their suite. We were very much interested by the proceedings; and the attorney-general, M. de Séguier, contrived very happily to allude to the visit that they received. Other gentlemen did the same, but not so well.

The president went through the entire palace with his imperial visitors, showing them the different apartments, and the holy chapel, that gem of stone work. The grand chaunter here paid his compliments.

All the counsellors were then presented to the princess and all made courtesies like women: the countess du Nord was becoming accustomed to this ceremony, and kept her gravity.

After this she paid a visit to the princess Marsan, who had formerly been governess to the princess de Piedmont, the king's sister. Madame de Marsan, *née* de Rohan Soubise, was widow of Gaston of Lorraine, count de Marsan. When she was governess to the royal children of France, she occupied a pavilion at the Tuileries, which still retains her name, and will perhaps for ever. The countess du Nord had been very intimate with the princess de Piedmont, when she was in Italy, and wished to compliment her who had formed the heart and mind of her friend. The princess de Piedmont, who had been very fat when a girl, was called Madame during the reign of Louis XV. This king, very fond of giving soubriquets, called her 'Gros Madame.' When she was married, in 1775, some persons composed the following lines:—

Le bon Savoyard, qui réclame
  Le prix de son double présent
En échange reçoit, *madame*,
  C'est le payer bien grassement.

The princess of Piedmont is an angel of piety and virtue; she is a saint, and Catholics have many in their calendar who were not as good as she.

The princess or countess of Marsan, as she was sometimes called, was sister to the prince of Soubise, who was married to a princess of Hesse-Rothenbourg. She was then sixty-two, she had been left a widow very young, and without children. She had the reputation of being very imperious, and rather prudish. Her father-in-law, Prince Camille de Marsan, of the house of Lorraine, had died this same year.

Madame de Marsan had been succeeded in her office of governess to the royal children by the princess de Guéménée, who was afterwards obliged to give it up, in consequence of the unfortunate bankruptcy of her husband. She had been succeeded by the duchess Jules de Polignac.

After dining with the countess du Nord, M. d'Oberkirch and I went to Champigny to take leave of my uncle, who was very ill. Our many engagements had prevented us from seeing him as often as we would wish. We did not leave him until midnight.

18*th June.*—I went to see Madame Beckendorf; she was very bad, but became a little consoled by my visit.

" How I envy you !" said she.

" It is I who ought to envy you ; in two months you will meet her imperial highness again, never to be separated, whilst I, once I part from her now, can never hope to see her more."

After I dined with this excellent woman, I took my leave, greatly moved by her distress. I embraced her several times. I went home to pack up. We did not know where to put all our purchases, which accumulate, one scarcely knows how, in a city like Paris. M. d'Oberkirch wished me to pay a farewell visit to the princess de Bouillon, which I did, making it as short as possible, being very much pressed for time. In spite of myself, I felt sad at the idea of leaving my husband alone, and of being so long separated from my father and daughter. I think partings are always mournful; they are semblance of that last parting that will separate us from all in this world, but to unite us, I hope, with God.

19*th June*.—We set out with the count and countess du Nord for Montbéliard. Our route was to be through Brittany, Normandy, Flanders, Holland, and the Electoral States. At the very moment of our departure the following verses were presented to the illustrious travellers. The first are by the chevalier du Coudray:—

By your presence, oh, princes! our vows you have blessed;
You depart, and each heart is by sorrow depressed;
And sad voices in France, as you part for your home,
Say, "Here ought you to stay, or ought ne'er to have come."

Here are others:—

When glorious Astrea's praise I hear,
Saddened, too oft I drop a tear.
Bright goddess! daughter of the skies,
She to her native mansion flies;
In vain she'd linger here or stay,
By adverse power she's chased away.
But brightly o'er the darksome north
Another star is breaking forth,
On Neva's bank will error shake,
For Astrea's son *her* course will take,
Uproot the errors, grown with time,
And raise to truth an arch sublime;
And truth and justice there shall make
A record time shall never shake.

Does my reader understand these? I should think not; to me they appear the most complete nonsense.

The count and countess du Nord quitted Paris with regret. Their success there had been perfect both at court and with the people. They were so good, so intellectual, and well informed, and their politeness and affability unbounded. The prince was particularly admired for his conversational powers,—so witty, so refined. The beauty of the princess and the merit of both were felt and acknowledged by all, from the highest to the lowest: wherever they went in public they were enthusiastically applauded, but especially at the theatres. This continued until the very day they left. It was the same through all France and every other country that they visited. They were absolutely adored in Russia. Many sayings of the grand-duke are still remembered—the following amongst others :—At the Academy M. d'Alembert presented M. de Malesherbes to his imperial highness.

"It is *here*, probably," said he, "that M. de Malesherbes has retired."

M. de Malesherbes was sensibly touched by the delicacy of the compliment.

The count of Artois, one day showing the prince some swords that were most exquisitely wrought, requested him to accept one. The prince replied :

"Not now, monsieur, allow me to wait until I can ask you for that which will have won Gibraltar."

This was just before the court had set out for Spain.

Madame de Beckendorf set out for Montbéliard at the same time as we, but at slow stages and by a shorter route. The princess and I charged her with our compliments and respects.

"You will see my dear parents before I will," said the countess du Nord, "present them with my tenderest affection ; tell them that my thoughts are ever with them, and that I count every moment until I shall see them again."

The count and countess du Nord, Prince Baratinsky and I, set off for Orleans in a coach and four. At parting with M. d'Oberkirch I could not prevent myself from weeping a little. The grand-duchess said that I shed exactly three tears ; she declared that she had counted them, and amused herself a great deal with my three tears. I know not how many I let fall, but I know very well that a great many remained upon my heart.

CHAPTER III.

Choisy—Reception by the royal family—What the queen said to me—The magic table—Orleans—The princes at Lyons—Ménard—M. de Marigny—The Blois accent—Anecdote of Sir William Hamilton—The count de Marnier—Javotte—Generosity—A *dame damée*—Nantes—Marquis de la Suze—M. de Cöeslosquet—M. de la Harpe—Strange—The Port de l'Orient—M. de Pirch and M. de Wirtersheim—The 'Powerful' sets sail—Our dress—Brest—Count Hector—M. de la Motte Piquet—Departure of seventy ships—Sham battle—M. Groignard—One of the queen's *femmes de chambre*—Lower Brittany—Belle Isle—Madame Montesson—The count of Artois and Mdlle. du Thé—The duchy of Mayence—The marquis de Broglia—Brood hens—Broglia chateau—MM. de Beauvron—The duke d'Harcourt—Marshal d'Harcourt.

19*th June.*—We were all sad, but we strove to conceal it. We were to breakfast at Choisy, where all the royal family had assembled to bid farewell to the count and countess du Nord. We had a delicious breakfast, of which only we travellers partook. The king, queen, and all the royal family, even the aunts of his majesty, walked about conversing. Their majesties and all the princes did me the honour of addressing me, especially our charming queen, who with delightful affability spoke to me in the most flattering manner.

"You will have a delightful journey," added she, " you are very fortunate. You will possibly find it a little fatiguing, but the society in which you are, will be a compensation for anything."

At the moment of our departure she said to me—

" Madame d'Oberkirch, of all who are going away, I regret you least, because I hope to see you again. Shall I not? And soon? I wish you a happy journey, however! Speak of me to the good Alsatians, whom I will never forget."

Before our departure we went through the entire chateau; it looks upon the Seine. The apartments of the late king were very curious as well as commodious; they were filled with rarities and gems of art. Amongst other things, we saw there a magnificent collection of porcelains. We also saw the celebrated magic table, the springs of which were become rusty from disuse; it was placed in the centre of a room, where none were allowed to enter but the invited guests of Louis XV.: it would accommodate thirty persons. In the centre was a cylinder of gilt copper, which could be pressed down by springs, and would return with its top, which was surrounded by a band, covered with dishes; around were placed four dumb waiters, on which would be found everything that was necessary. At the time I write, 1789, this table no longer exists, having been long since destroyed, with everything that could recal the last sad years of a monarch who would have been good if he had not been perverted by evil counsels.

At Choisy, as everywhere else, the count and countess du Nord left traces of their bounty.

From Choisy we went direct to Orleans, only stopping to change horses. We arrived at eleven at night, after a day of frightful dust and heat. We were all very anxious to get to bed. Schneider was like a fool; she did a thousand ridiculous things; she could not understand the people of the hôtel, or make herself understood by them. The countess du Nord laughed a great deal at all this Schneider often spoke of her good friend Madame Hendel.

The next day we saw everything that was curious at Orleans, which, however, did not prevent our setting out at an early hour. The Prince Baratinsky took leave of us here to return to Paris; his place in the carriage was taken by M. de Beckendorf.

20*th June*.—We took the road to Tours, which runs along the banks of the Loire, the country about which is like a terrestrial paradise.

"Ah!" said the countess du Nord; "how charmed my dear mamma would be to see this!"

She then began speaking of her parents, of the joy she had felt, the May before, in finding at Lyons the duke and duchess of Wurtemberg (who travelled under the names of the count and countess de Justin), and several of their children.

"We went about a great deal with my brothers," said she. "We saw the columns of the temple of Augustus, which we admired very much. We visited the Hôtel de Ville, where we saw some experiments in natural philosophy performed by Sieur Crotone. My sisters were almost frightened, which I thought very strange. Ah! how much I wish I had them with me now, to show them all that I am going to see!"

Her goodness of heart appeared in everything.

They then spoke of the gallery of arms, which contains eighty thousand firelocks. The grand-duke had been greatly struck by them.

"I hope," said the grand-duchess, "that these valiant and amiable Frenchmen will never direct them against my dear Russians; it is much better to be friends."

The grand-duke had insisted on visiting the hospitals, notwithstanding the remonstrances that had been made him.

"The farther one is removed from the miseries of humanity," replied he, "the more one ought to seek to know and to alleviate them."

He united the practice to the precept, and distributed amongst the inmates a large sum. He showed the same liberality at Tours, not only to the sick, but to the poor, and to all who had done him the smallest service. He presented the sergeant in command of the guard appointed for his service, with a watch set in diamonds. His munificence was extreme: he certainly must have spent two millions on this journey.

We stopped at Menars, before arriving at Blois. It is a magnificent chateau, belonging to the brother of Madame Pompadour, whom the late king had successively made marquis de Vandières (the courtiers changed it to 'd'avant-hier,' not, however, publicly), of Martigny, and Menars. He called himself simply Poisson, and was not at all inflated by his elevation. He was always received into the best society, and both he and his wife were very much liked. He died about a year since, and left no children. Louis XV. had also made him inspector *des bâtimens*, and gave him an office in the chancellorship of orders, which gave him the right to wear the blue ribbon of the order without showing his testimonials. Some person remarked on this occasion, that he was too small a fish (poisson) to put into *blue* (water). When the French have no other remedy, they turn the faults of their masters, and sometimes their own, into ridicule.

From Menars, which is a very beautiful place, there is a splendid view: you can see the entire course of the Loire, Blois, and Chambord, where Marshal Saxe died. We had not time to visit the last-mentioned town. The gardens of Menars are superb, and indeed so are the buildings and furniture. There are various works of art, in which M. de Marigny was a connoisseur.

After Menars we came to Blois, which we only passed through, with the exception of visiting the castle, la Salle des Elots, and the place where the duke of Guise was assassinated. It is said that the inhabitants of Blois speak very pure French: I know not whether it is prejudice, or my Alsatian ears, which makes me much prefer the Parisian accent; at Blois, I think the people speak in a slow and singing tone, that is very disagreeable. We could see, at a little distance, Chanteloup, built by the princess des Ursins, who wished to have it erected into a principality, which, however, she was not able to obtain. At the time of which I write it belonged to the duke de Choiseul, a disgraced minister of Louis XV.

Amboise, the ancient castle of our kings, and in which Charles the Eighth was born, can be discerned at a distance, on the top of a rock. The count du Nord wished to see it. At last we arrived at Tours, where we were to pass the night. At the moment that we caught the first glimpse of this city, the grand-duke burst out laughing, and kissed the grand-duchess. I could not see the cause of this; but he said very coolly, as he looked at us,—

"I love my wife very much."

The grand-duchess laughed aloud, and said,—

"Tell the story to Madame d'Oberkirch; do, I beseech you."

The grand-duke complied: and told how, that when he had been at Naples, he had invited Sir William Hamilton to accompany him and the grand-duchess to Pompeii. On the route, her imperial highness having said something very complimentary to her husband, he expressed his gratitude by kissing her hand. This demonstration of affection shocked the severe prudery of the Englishman, who sat by with a most serious countenance. The grand-duke was greatly amused, and resolved to continue the pastime. The conversation became very gay and animated, and the grand-duke took advantage of the next favourable opportunity, and kissed the grand-duchess; this put the poor baronet quite out of countenance, who, affecting to look at the scenery, put his head out of the window. When he drew it in again, his imperial highness said to him very gravely,

"I love my wife very much."

"It is a very natural affection," replied the baronet, embarrassed.

"Is it not?" said he, kissing the princess again, who yielded to this pleasantry with a very good grace.

Sir William did not know what to do, and the count du Nord said, even more gravely than before,

"You see that I love my wife very much."

We were still laughing at this story, when we entered the capital of Tourraine, where we got a bad supper and very bad beds; but we were in good spirits, and laughed at our misfortunes. We slept very well, notwithstanding our uncomfortable couches.

21*st June.*—Before leaving Tours we went to see the Mall, which is considered the finest in France. We admired it very much, but passed over it very quickly, so great was our anxiety to renew our journey. The heat was intense. We arrived in time for dinner at Saumur, and during the repast we were regaled with some excellent military music, a pleasure that we owed to the politeness of count de Marnier, lieutenant-colonel. The count d'Andlau, the colonel, had been appointed minister plenipotentiary at Bruxelles, and no person had yet got the command of his regiment. I was very sorry not to have seen him. The officers paid a visit of ceremony to their imperial highnesses.

In the hôtel where we stopped we were attended at supper by a little peasant girl, who attracted the attention of the grand-duchess. She was exceedingly pretty, and appeared sharp and intelligent. The princess pointed her out to the grand-duke, and he and we stared at her, but she was not in the least disconcerted.

"She is a pretty girl," said he.

She raised her head and smiled, displaying two rows of teeth as white as milk.

"What is your name, my child?" said the princess.

"Jeanne, madame; but I am called Javotte, because they say that I talk a great deal."

"Ah! you are fond of talking," said the prince, "would you talk with me?"

"I will if you wish."

"You are not afraid?"

"I am not afraid of you, sir; I know very well that you are a great prince, and very rich—as rich as the king: but you look as if you were good, and I would not be so much afraid of you as of the handsome sub-lieutenants of the 'Royal Lorraine.'"

The grand-duke began to laugh, and said to us pointedly,

"You see that Javotte, who is afraid of handsome gentlemen, is of the same opinion as the Parisians."

He alluded to the day when he heard some person near him in a crowd at Paris say that he was ugly.

"Well, Javotte, you think that I am good; what would you wish me to do for you?"

"*Dame!* sir, I do not know."

"You don't know? Think."

She smiled—a very shrewd smile, and spoke like a waiting maid in a comedy.

"Ah! I know very well, perhaps."

"Shall I tell it for you?"

"Ah! do; let you say it."

"Let us see: will you answer me honestly?"

"Ah! yes."

"Have you a lover?"

She became quite red, which showed that she was not bold, though a little forward. She twisted her apron, and said with a sigh:

"Ah! yes."

"What is his name?"

"Bastien Raulé, at your service," and she made a curtsy.

"What is he?"

"He is a stone-cutter: it is a very good trade, but very dirty and fatiguing."

"Why don't you marry him?"

"Ah! now you are coming to it, sir."

"Is he rich?"

" Alas ! no."

" And you ?"

" I have only my wages, ten crowns a-year."

" That is the reason that you do not marry ?"

" That is the reason, sir : he is anxious, and so am I."

" Is he handsome ?"

" Ah ! I can answer for that. When he is cleaned and dressed, he is handsomer than all the officers of the ' Royal Lorraine.' "

" And how much money should you have to get married ?"

" A great deal—a great deal of money ! More, perhaps, than you have in your purse."

" How much ?"

" We would want——a hundred crowns !"

When she had uttered the *enormous* amount of her wants, she cast down her eyes, and became redder than before. The count du Nord smiled, and looked at his beloved consort, wishing to leave her the pleasure of making the poor girl happy.

" Come here, Javotte," said she, " and hold out your apron."

She then took fifteen louis d'ors out of her purse, and dropped them into the apron of the servant. Javotte was so surprised and overjoyed that she let go her hold of the apron, raised her hands to heaven, and cried :

“ Oh, my God ! is this possible ?”

The louis rolled about the floor, but she took no notice of them ; but with her eyes filled with tears, and without uttering another word, she kissed the hem of the princess’s robe with a graceful simplicity that touched us all. She was the sole subject of our conversation during supper. Before going to bed, I wrote down this little scene just as it had happened. The count du Nord reminds me very often of Henri IV.

23*rd June.*—We got up early to see a review of the Lorraine regiment.

As we were going to the carriage, we saw Javotte approaching, led by a very handsome young man, both in holiday trim, and holding in their hands an immense bouquet of roses. They made a most profound reverence, and offered their flowers to their imperial highnesses, who received them most graciously. The poor girl was so moved, that she could not speak ; her gay chat of the evening before had entirely disappeared. We dined at Oudon. A lady of about forty, but handsome, came to pay her respects to the count and countess du Nord. I forget her name ; but I remember that she was either a lady *damée,* or had a *brevet de dame.* Many of these still exist. It was a custom introduced in the reign of Louis XV., who often granted this privilege to very young ladies.

It is a favour that can only be obtained now by those who possess very great interest at court, being considered as unfavourable to strict morality. The advantage of it was, that unmarried ladies of rank could be presented at court, and enjoy all the privileges consequent on this distinction.

It was early when we arrived at Nantes. It is a beautiful city; but, alas! the edict that Henry IV. signed there, in favour of the Protestants, has been revoked by Louis XVI. God knows the sad consequence! At a league and a half from the city, their imperial highnesses were met by the marquis de la Suze, colonel of the Dauphin regiment of infantry; and, when they arrived, all the officers came to pay their respects; the king having given orders that they should be received everywhere with the highest honours. M. de Cöeslosquet was the lieutenant-colonel of this regiment; viscount d'Hautefeuille, and viscount de Foneauld, are colonel and lieutenant-colonel of the regiment of the Isle of France, and also came with their officers to pay their respects. The marquis de Suze offered his carriage to take the illustrious travellers to see the Port—the "promenade du Cours." It was accepted: they went in it also to the theatre. The piece performed was a comedy, called 'La Coquette fixée.' The count and countess du Nord were enthusiastically cheered.

23*rd June.*—We went early in the morning to see a review of the troops. Their imperial highnesses were received with the highest military honours. We then set out for Pont-Château, where we were to dine. We were very gay, and amused ourselves a great deal as we drove along. I forgot who it was that mentioned M. de la Harpe, and called him ' Chafoin.'

"That name exactly suits that *lover* of my mother," said the grand-duke, laughing: "I will most certainly tell the empress, how her knight was treated at Paris."

Notwithstanding this mockery, the count du Nord had presented M. de la Harpe with a gold snuff-box, set in diamonds, and on which the insignia of the Muses were most exquisitely wrought. It was a very valuable present.

We crossed the Vilaine, in a boat à la Roche-Bernard, and came to Musillac, where we were to sleep. The inns were most wretched; and the countess du Nord laughed for nearly an hour at the decorations of her bed. Every bit of embroidery that could be found for ten leagues round, was put in requisition to make suitable hangings for a grand-duchess. I passed the night in her room. The grand-duke did not go to bed at all; he remained all night writing, in a room next to us.

24*th June*.—The heat was intolerable. Whilst we were at dinner at Vannes, we were obliged to have every door in the house open. We were so exhausted—both men and horses—that we stopped for three hours to refresh ourselves. We passed through Hennubon, where part of the royal regiment of Darmstadt was stationed; and the remainder was at L'Orient, where we arrived at eight in the evening. Immediately after our arrival, the commanders of the port and garrison proposed to their imperial highnesses to sail about the harbour for a little while, in one of their vessels. We found the port filled with ships of every description, and of almost every nation; all of which hoisted their flags in honour of the travellers. It was a grand sight!

Baron de Pirch was colonel of the 'Royal Darmstadt;' and I heard, with great pleasure, that he had entirely recovered the effects of his wound. I also found here a compatriot, baron de Weitersheim, with whom I talked a great deal of our dear Alsace.

25*th June*.—We saw the 'Powerful' set sail; it was a ship of a hundred and ten guns. It was to go to Rochelle. What can be more beautiful than these majestic 'men-of-war!' After dinner we went to visit a warehouse of India silks and porcelains, where the countess du Nord made a great many purchases. She bought, in particular, a piece of sky-blue satin, beautifully embroidered; it was the most beautiful manufacture of the kind that I ever saw: this she cut in two, and gave me one half, keeping the other for herself.

"For the future, my dear Lane," said she, "we will call this satin *our robe;* we will have our dresses made exactly alike, and we will agree on certain days of the year when we will wear them, in order that we may be dressed alike, though far apart; just as we used to do long ago in our linen frocks, that Madame Hendel despised so much. It will lessen the pains of separation; do you think so?"

This beloved princess knew well how to enhance the value of the presents that she made her friends, by the affectionate sentiments by which she accompanied them. She also forced me to accept the most charming china monkey I ever saw. It would make one laugh, however sad she may be. It is at this moment that I write, on the table opposite me.

We slept at Quimper-Corentin; and, I ask, did a Russian grand-duchess ever before sleep at Quimper-Corentin? The countess du Nord was here presented with a basket of the most beautiful roses that one could possibly imagine. She was enchanted: they had to be taken from her almost by force; she wanted to keep them all night in her room, at the risk of getting ill. The love of flowers, carried to such excess, becomes almost a passion.

26*th June.*—We dined at Chataulin, after which we set out for Brest, where we slept. At our arrival, M. de Hector, commander of the port, and M. de Langeron, commander of the troops, came to pay their respects to their imperial highnesses, and to receive their orders. M. de Mortemars, colonel, and Count Buffevant, lieutenant of the Lorraine regiment, also came with several of their officers. I was acquainted with Count Buffevant. His brother, the viscount, had married Mdlle. de la Galaisière, daughter of the governor of Strasburg.

I was struck by the rather singular name of Count Hector, and asked a great many questions about him. I was told of a very strange letter that had been sent him two years before, and of which the contents were very generally known. His correspondent asked whether he was the son of Priam, or of a '*valet de carreau;*' accused him of cowardice, and of having put off his uniform on a day of battle, so that he might be less conspicuous to the enemy. He proceeded then to cite the example of Count d'Estaing, of whom it was said that he was envious. The epistle was wound up with an exhortation to endeavour to acquire courage, and be worthy of becoming the head of a new branch of Hectors.

All this appeared to be very unjust, which however did not make it the less painful.

27*th June.*—We were awakened by the report of all the cannon of the port, and of the ships which were fired simultaneously, in honour of the distinguished guests then in the city. M. de Hector, and some naval gentlemen, came to take us in a boat to the admiral's ship, the 'Invincible,' commanded by the count de la Motte-Piquet, lieutenant-general in the navy, one of the greatest commanders of our time. He distinguished himself at the battle of Port Royal. We saw sixty-six vessels pass Rochelle to join the fleet destined for America. The squadron of the count de la Motte-Piquet consisted of seven ships. To amuse the grand-duchess, he commanded a naval sham battle between two 'men-of-war.' It was a splendid sight, but a little terrifying. I do not think that I would like to see a real fight between these noble ships.

After dinner we saw a frigate launched, and were shown six model vessels, and a model of the port of Toulon, executed by M. Grognard, who explained their merits to us himself. This learned man has become celebrated even amongst foreigners, and has already received invitations from several sovereigns to visit their ports, and oversee any repairs they may require.

We then went to the theatre; the performance was 'L'Amour et la Folie,' a wretched affair. After this their imperial highnessess were requested to come out upon a terrace and show themselves to the people, who were loudly demanding to see them: they did, and were rapturously cheered. We had a splendid supper, after which we went again to the port to see two vessels illuminated, and all their colours flying, in compliment to the grand-duchess, and by command of M. de la Motte-Piquet.

28*th June.*—The queen was right when she said that I would find my journey fatiguing. She knew by experience what were these visits of ceremony, and pleasure excursions where one cannot procure a quarter of an hour's repose. This day we went about like cats, as I heard one of the postilions say, looking at this, and looking at that. What was there that we did not see? We visited galleys, put regiments through their exercise, and all under a raging sun that would be worthy of Senegal. After all this, we were obliged to dress for a ceremonious dinner; then go to the theatre to see the 'Judgment of Midas;' and then pay a visit to Madame de Hector, who had with her all the principal ladies of the town.

The count and countess du Nord took leave there of the citizens, and were very well pleased with their reception in this city. There are very extraordinary things to be seen in a seaport, and indeed in everything connected with the navy. Nothing can give a higher idea of the inventive powers of the human mind.

Carriages cannot pass through the streets of Brest, the ladies are carried about in hand-chairs.

29*th June.*—Before leaving we were obliged to see another review of the troops, during which the princess said a thousand ridiculous things to me. She sought for resemblances in the people about her to persons whom she knew. She detected a very remarkable likeness in a curious-looking person near her carriage to one of the waiting-maids of the queen, who had been very much spoken of. Louis XV. met her one day at Fontainebleau, I think, very richly dressed and covered with diamonds; he thought she was one of the ladies of the court, and saluted her with a most profound bow. The queen heard of it, and jested with the king about it. It was then suggested that the waiting-maids should be obliged to wear aprons, as a mark of their office, but I believe that this was never enforced. Since this adventure this woman enjoys a kind of celebrity, and is shown to all strangers. The countess du Nord had seen her, and remembered her perfectly well.

We dined at Landernau, and went on to Morlaix to sleep. Here we saw a frigate, formerly called the 'Black Princess,' and now the 'Marchioness de Castries,' but could get no explanation of either of these strange names. Lower Brittany is a frightful country, and the people speak an incomprehensible language, which I was told was not a patois, but a corruption of the original Celtic, which seems very probable, for it is with very little difference the same language as is spoken amongst the mountains of Wales. However it may be, the language of Lower Brittany is much farther removed from French than our despised German Alsatian is from the pure Saxon. One may get something to eat there, but so dirty and ill dressed that the very appearance destroys one's appetite. The men dressed in leather reminded the count du Nord of his Tartars.

30*th June.*—We dined at Belle-Isle. It is an island (that is a fact worthy of M. de la Palesie)—it is a real island, six leagues long and two broad. It bears the title of Marquisite. It formerly belonged to the marquis of Belle-Isle, who inherited it from his grandfather, under governor Fouquet. He exchanged with the king for the comté of Gisors, and some other places in Normandy, which were created a dukedom, a title that became extinct by the death of his only son, who was killed before his father. At Belle-Isle we were shown many curious things ; amongst others the remains of the castle of the Fouquets, and some Gobelin tapestries. These latter reminded the count du Nord of the tapestries presented to him by her majesty, and which represented the history of Peter the Great. It appeared that they were magnificent.

" The empress will be delighted with them," said he, " and I can imagine the very spot where they will be hung."

" I am certain," said the countess du Nord, laughing, " that she will ask us for many things that we take, but it will be our greatest pleasure to offer them to her."

" My mother has a very enlightened taste," said the prince ; she has surrounded herself with some of the rarest and most beautiful productions of Europe, which she spared no expense to obtain."

" She is, indeed, Catherine the Great," said I, " she is a *grand homme.* The hand of ordinary women would not be equal to support that globe and sceptre, which have been already too heavy for a masculine grasp."

We went to St. Brieux, where we were over-taken by very heavy rain ; we were obliged to shut the doors, and could not put out our noses.

1*st July.*—We arrived at Bron for dinner. The inhabitants stared at us as if we were wild beasts, going to the fair of Saint Laurent. Our dinner consisted only of eggs dressed in various ways ; but we compensated ourselves by a good supper at Rennes, where we passed the night in an excellent hôtel. This was the first hôtel we met in Brittany that was worthy of the name. We remained there, however, but a short time, as there was but very little to be seen or learned in this wretched country.

2*nd July.*—We dined at Vitré, a barony belonging to the duke de Tremouille. I know not what made the count du Nord begin to speak of Madame Montesson ; perhaps it was because she is a Breton, and but very little esteemed in her native province. It may have been that the prince was not really annoyed at her house, for he added carelessly, that he had made it a rule whilst in Paris not to take refreshment in the house of any private person, even though they may have expected him to do so.

" It was from etiquette that we could not show her the attention due to a duchess of Orleans, and that we confined ourselves to merely appearing at her theatricals."

These words had great meaning when spoken by the grand-duke. We then spoke of the count of Artois, who has the reputation of not being the most faithful husband. The grand-duchess attacked him with the vehemence of a woman who felt interested in such things. Not that the grand-duke, who is an adoring husband, ever gave her the slightest cause of suspicion, or ever took notice of any other lady, however beautiful she may be; but she loved him passionately, and true love is never free from a tinge of *preventive* jealousy.

" It is shocking," said she, " to neglect a young princess in that manner. I know that she is not handsome,—that she does not shine in society; but she may love him better than a more beautiful woman: besides she is the mother of his children. He ought not to deceive her so."

" Since he deceives her, madame, it is sign that he loves her," said M. de la Fermière, secretary.

" That is strange reasoning!"

" But it is correct. If he did not love her, he would not take the trouble of deceiving her, but would act as he pleased, without thinking about her."

" Monsieur," said the grand-duchess, addressing her husband, " I request that you will never love me in that manner."

" Ma chère amie," said he, " I am neither fashionable or handsome, like the count of Artois, nor do you in any way resemble the excellent Savoy princess."

"I am not excellent?"

"Do not make me say any more. I will tell you a bon mot of the Parisians, who make them on everything, and which I was told by prince Baratinsky; it will explain what I would not wish to say more plainly to you. They say that the count of Artois, having had a surfeit of Savoy biscuit, would like a little *thé* (tea). You remember that handsome Mdlle. du *Thé*, that we saw in her box at the theatre; she is mistress of the count. Do you understand now why you have nothing to fear from me, my lovely princess?"

The countess du Nord blushed and cast down her eyes; she had preserved all the modesty and *naïveté* of a girl.

When we were leaving Vitré, we wished to visit Les Rochers, an estate belonging to the celebrated Madame de Sévigné, but we were told that the roads were so bad from the heavy rains that we could not go there. We went then directly to Mayence, where we slept. The name of this town recalled to my mind the terrible enemy of our religion, and I thought of the dreadful persecutions suffered formerly by my brethren. Mayence is the chief town of this duchy, which belongs to the house of Lorraine. Cardinal Mazarin purchased it, and gave it to Charles de la Porte, duke de la Meilleray, in consideration of the marriage of his eminence's niece, Hortense Mancini, with the son of this duke. The young man took the title of duke of Mazarin.

3rd July.—We entered Normandy: we dined at Prezen Pail, and then passed through Alençon, where the grand-duchess bought some beautiful lace; and lastly we came to Seiz, where we were to spend the night. We met there the chevalier de Broglia, and his brother-in-law M. de Montmorency, who came to pay their respects, and to ask their imperial highnesses, on the part of the marquis de Broglia, to stop at Broglia, through which we were to pass next day. The prince and princess consented. The officers of the Conti regiment also came to pay their respects, and we went to the square to see the troops put through their exercises. The grand-duchess did not wish to go to Broglia. The marquis was considered a very rude and disagreeable man, which, of course, she did not expect him to be to her; but still she had the greatest objection to pay this visit, which threatened to be a great bore, and complained very much to me of being obliged to go. Our conversation had turned on grave subjects; and an expression escaped her which I never heard her repeat, but which appeared the true expression of what she felt:

"Ah, my dear Lane," said she, "I often feel as if I were still Dorothea, and forget to play my part as Mary Fœderowna."

The marquis de Broglia was prince of the holy empire, governor and commander-in-chief of Metz and Messin, knight of several orders, and married for the second time. His wife was Mdlle. de Crozet de Thiers: they had at least seven or eight children. I remember but two. The eldest, who had a most excellent disposition, had been colonel of the Saintonge regiment, and afterward field-marshal. He was enthusiastic about our modern opinions, and a great partizan of the Americans, for whom I confess I care very little. He had accompanied the marquis de Lafayette when he went to aid them in their efforts to gain independence. I do not understand politics, but still I think that Louis XVI. has committed a great error in authorizing that expedition. Where is the use of this Donquixotism for rebels?

The marquis's second son, prince de Revel, was at this time aide-de-camp to my cousin, count Falkenstein, in the expedition to Minorca. He was advanced in 1782, as a reward for having borne away some standards from the enemy. He was married to Mdlle. de Vetteillas.

I forget the rest of the *brood*, as my mother-in-law used to call any family that exceeded a certain number. She had been very anxious to have several children herself; but when she found that she should be content with two, she expressed the most dignified contempt for more fortunate mothers. She used to call them brood-hens. My mother-in-law often used expressions that gave proof of a sometimes unamiable disposition, I must confess. I do not know how I came to write of her at the same time as of the Broglias, and Normandy; it flowed inadvertently from my pen.

The Broglias were connected with the Lameths, the Montmorencys, the Damas-Crux, the Helmstedts, the Boisses, and innumerable others.

4*th July*.—We left Seiz at six in the morning, and dined at a little village called Verneuse, after which we went to Broglia, where we remained for an hour. A bridge had been thrown from the end of the park to the road to facilitate the arrival of their imperial highnesses at the chateau. They were received by the marquis, marchioness, and all their family. A magnificent collation was prepared, but it was scarcely tasted; there was then a little promenade, but all parties were cold, restrained, and weary, and at length we parted with mutual pleasure, in spite of all the fine things that were said. The chateau had been built by the marquis, and yet it looks venerable as if with age. It is very large, but not pleasing to the eye.

We passed on to Rouen; and it appeared very strange to me to be again so near Paris, after having travelled so much. The grand-duke and duchess were waited on here by the governor, marquis de Beuvron, and his daughter-in-law. He was second son of the marquis de Harcourt, and brother to the duke of the same name, and married to Mdlle. Bouillé de Jouy, by whom he had two children, a son, count de Beuvron, lieutenant-colonel of a cavalry regiment, and married to Mdlle. Leveneur de Tillières, and a daughter married to the marquis de Harcourt d'Olonde, field-marshal.

The marquis de Beuvron's father, the marshal de Harcourt, was still alive, and eighty years of age. He had been governor-general of Normandy, but had given up this office some years before, in favour of his eldest son, the duke de Harcourt. He had been a great favourite with the ladies, and still retained the most courteous manners. He was a man of great merit and goodness of heart, of a disposition sensitive as a woman. In his youth he had had a most romantic adventure with a princess, with whom he was passionately in love, but for whom he was obliged to overcome his feelings, the king having *commanded* that all intercourse between them should cease, in order to save the reputation of the lady, whose husband had become suspicious. The princess tried to have her lover assassinated, from a romantic idea.

"If he does not belong to me," said she, "he shall not belong to any one."

This story, which I heard from the duchess de Bourbon, I may tell in another part of my memoirs.

CHAPTER IV.

Baron de Bock—M. de Conrobert—Amiens; arrival of Prince Baratinsky —The count d'Equevilly—The princess de Robecque—The Montmorency family—Le chien de Nivelle—Dunkirk—Ostend—The Archduchess Christina, governess of the Low Countries—The prince of Starenberg—High offices—Anecdote of the count of Starenberg and the duke de Choiseul—Prince de Rauwitz—Prince de Ligne—Anecdote—The nun—Dreikscheid—The old cities of Flanders—Curious story of the count du Nord—Strange vision—The Béguinages—Dinner at the archduchess's—The sick pearl—Medallion—Court ball—Simon the saddler—Prince Galitzin—M. de Markoff—The convent of St. Michael.

4th July.—THE officers of the Bourbon regiment also came to pay their respects; amongst them was my cousin baron de Bock. The count du Nord inquired the name of a young officer, whose distinguished air attracted his attention. He was M. de Carrobert, lieutenant. The same evening prince Baratinsky came from Paris to see the count and countess du Nord. We were very glad to see him: he brought us all the news of Versailles, where they were amusing themselves very much. He also brought a present from the queen to the grand-duchess, of a cup of Sèvres china, on which were the portraits of the king and queen, of the dauphin and the princess royal, all astonishingly alike. It was a gem; and to make it still more valuable, the mould was broken in which it had been cast. The grand-duchess was very much pleased with this beautiful present; but still more with the autograph letter of Marie Antoinette, by which it was accompanied.

In the evening we went to the theatre with Madame de Beauvron, and Madame de Harcourt. The performance was 'L'Amant Jaloux.' The countess du Nord was worn out with fatigue: these continual ceremonies were a dreadful labour. She did me the honour of saying to me, when she was going to bed, that she would rather be a Norman peasant, and live with the grand-duke in a hut.

"I hope," said I, "that your imperial highness would ornament your sheep and hook with knots of ribbon. And any shepherdess that respects herself, always wears a crown of roses, and a canary on her finger."

We laughed at this with all the gaiety of childhood: care made little impression on either of us, both had met a happy destiny, each in her sphere.

5th July.—We went through Rouen with Madame Beauvron, and saw everything that was worth being seen. My head was become almost giddy, and I was very glad when we got again into our travelling carriage. We got a good way on our route this day, and arrived at Amiens to sleep. We had a delightful supper, though we were dreadfully fatigued. The count du Nord related a number of most amusing anecdotes, at which the countess and I laughed to excess. Prince Baratinsky had accompanied us as far as this city, and was to leave next morning for Paris. This travelling life is very delightful, if one were always certain of a bed.

I find on the leaves of my journal a magnificent tirade on the vicissitudes of Normandy, but I will not inflict it on my readers. Such things may be useful to one's self or her children; but memoirs are not usually read for the sake of hearing an account of Rolla or Charles the Simple.

The only thing that I remember of Amiens is, that excellent patés are made there.

6th July.—We left Amiens, dined at Doulens, then proceeded to St. Pol, then to Béthune, where we found the count d'Equevilly, colonel of the 'royal cavalry,' with his regiment under arms. Their imperial highnesses were received with great honour, but made little delay in the town, as we were to sleep at Lisle. The governor of Flanders, prince de Robecque, was very attentive and polite.

Prince de Robecque is a Montmorency, and heir of the third division of the branch de Fosseux; the other two parts are represented by the Montmorency de Luxembourg, and de Tingry. Everybody knows that the branches of Nivelle and Fosseux were disinherited, for having taken part with the duke of Burgundy against Louis XI. A song that had been written on this circumstance, began thus,

> Ce chien de Nivelle,
> Qui s'en va quand on l'appelle.

These two branches settled in the low countries, where the elder obtained the comté of Horn. The last count of Horn was decapitated. At the extinction of the branch of the dukes of Montmorency, by the death of the marshal de Montmorency, who was beheaded at Toulouse in 1632, the Montmorency-Fosseux returned to France, where they have since rendered many important services. There *are* real Montmorencys in France, whatever people may say.

The head of the house of Montmorency bears the title of baron, and this family were the first who bore this title in France, which reminds me of an anecdote that I heard in Paris. The baron de Montmorency entered a drawing-room at the same time as a newly-created baron (whose name I forget), and the servant announced—

"The barons of Montmorency and of * * *."

The latter said quickly,—

"It is a fact, then, that extremes do meet."

This was considered very good taste in the new baron, who was besides a distinguished mathematician.

Like the rest, prince Robecque took us round the town to see the 'sights.' One of these was an hospital called 'L'Hôpital Comtesse,' in which the patients were served in silver, in fulfilment of a vow of the countess of Flanders. The countess du Nord said that she would do the same at St. Petersburg if she could.

7th July.—We went on the esplanade to see the troops defile and exercise, under a burning sun. There were the regiments of 'General infantry,' which was really magnificent, the 'Orleans Infantry,' and the 'Royal Dragoons.' It was a splendid sight, but we were dissolving from heat.

"Mon Dieu!" said the count du Nord, when we got into the carriage to leave Lisle; "how heavily do *honours* sometimes press! Would it not have been better to have left these poor people and us quiet under such a raging sun?"

I think the grand-duke was right.

We dined at Lisle, and when the heat had decreased a little we set off for Dunkirk. It was a most delightful route. It was like a garden; nothing but plantations visible on every side, and the villages all so neat and clean. Prince de Robecque accompanied their imperial highnesses whilst they were in the province under his command. At Dunkirk he provided us with a most delicious supper of sea-fish, and amused us by the most delightful conversation. He was really a 'grand seigneur,' such as were formerly at the court of France.

8th July.—Still going about to 'see:' the ruined fortifications, the port, the soldiers, &c.

"I assure you," said M. de la Fermière, "that all these sights go in through one of my eyes and come out through the other."

After dinner we paid adieu to France, and entered on the Austrian territories. We were to sleep at Ostend. I must acknowledge that this life of a 'wandering Jew' did not please me at all—every day new faces, and new lodgings; constant changing of dress. To enjoy travelling properly, one should take time, and not run through cities as if one were at a hunt.

The first thing we learned at Ostend was the arrival of the Archduchess Christina, duchess of Saxe-Feschen, and sister of the Emperor Joseph II., and of our beloved queen, Marie Antoinette. These two sisters are tenderly attached to each other. The Archduchess Christina was at that time forty years of age; her husband, who was governor of this part of the country, was a little older than she.

The governor's minister was Prince Starenberg, knight of the 'Golden Fleece,' and of the order of St. Stephen: he was also minister of state to the emperor, and minister plenipotentiary at the court of their royal highnesses the governors-general of the Low Countries. In fact, he depended only on the emperor.

Prince de Grimberghe was master of the horse.

Prince de Gavre was grand marshal.

Count de Sart was master of the household.

Besides these persons, the Archduchess Christina was accompanied by the prince de Ligne, M. de Sackendorf, and M. de Kempsel. Prince Starenberg was a man of intellect, a diplomatist, and an experienced courtier. The count de Starenberg had been Austrian ambassador in France, and he told himself a very amusing circumstance that occurred to him there.

The duke de Choiseul had been appointed minister of foreign affairs, and the count de Starenberg went to pay his respects, as was customary. He was kept waiting a very long time, and at length desired that he should be a second time announced to the duke. He was requested to wait a little longer. He became very angry, and declared aloud that he would complain of this treatment to the king; and when he was at length introduced into the apartment of the minister, his rage was ungovernable.

"Duke," said he, foaming with passion, "you have left the ambassador of the emperor waiting for an hour in your antechamber. Are these new instructions that you have received? What am I to think of this veiled insult? Were you very importantly engaged?"

"I must confess that I was not very seriously employed," said the duke, smiling calmly; "I was only trying to unravel a logograph: but I wished to show my respect for the customs of the Austrian court, for I remembered that under the same circumstances prince de Kaunitz kept me waiting an hour in his antechamber, and I thought that I could not do better than imitate him."

The count thought the retaliation excellent, and burst out laughing, and had the good sense to tell the story everywhere himself, fearing that by another it would only be told to his disadvantage. A wise man will explain what a fool would deny.

The prince de Ligne was a man of intellect, and well bred as it was possible for man to be. He had been appointed lieutenant-general, and was distinguished for his valour during the seven years' war. It would not be possible for me to describe the expression of his face,—so refined, so amiable, so good, so true, and yet so undecided. His smile was more eloquent than words. He was the Emperor Joseph II.'s confidential friend, and was also a great favourite of the czarina.

We passed a most delightful evening with all these guests, who were most amusing companions, —especially the prince de Ligne, who remained after all the rest. He told us a thousand charming anecdotes, and I cannot refrain from relating one —an episode in his own life.

He had a niece,—boarder at the Capuchin convent, Rue St. Antoine,—I cannot remember her family name, although I wrote it; but I am certain that her Christian name was Charlotte, and that she was very nearly related to the Lichtensteins. She was intelligent and handsome, and a great favourite of her uncle, who very often went to see her. She was constantly telling him of a beautiful novice, who was very soon to pronounce the vows that would seclude her for life; and described her as so very lovely and interesting, that the prince was most anxious to see her. He asked his niece whether he would be allowed to be present at her profession. She told him that it would be utterly impossible, as the ceremony would take place in the interior of the convent, where none but ladies were admitted. This was a disappointment to the prince; but he soon found a means of gratifying his curiosity. The eve of the day fixed for the ceremony, he again visited his niece, and said to her,—

"My dear niece, a lady, who is a relation of mine, and canoness of a regular order, is come to Paris, and wishes to be present to-morrow at the profession of your friend. Do you think that I could get permission for her?"

"Most certainly, uncle, if you ask for it."

The permission was asked, and granted; but only to go into the chapel, not enter the interior. I forget what name was bestowed upon this pretended cousin. At the appointed hour next morning, a lady, dressed in black and closely veiled, and with a large cross suspended by a blue ribbon round her neck, presented the porter with the permission granted by the abbess, and was introduced into the chapel. She did not speak to any person, but bowed politely and in silence; she, however, took the precaution of choosing a seat from which she could easily see the ceremony. That she did see very well, is proved by the fact, that never was effaced from her imagination the impression that it that day received. Never could she forget that young novice—so pale, so beautiful, and so resigned; and whose demeanour spoke more of sadness than devotion. When the moment arrived, that the vows were to be uttered that would for ever separate her from the outer world, she raised her eyes to heaven, with an expression that words could never paint. In that mute glance were spoken reproach, and grief mingled with the mild and gentle resignation of a victim who yields to a sacrifice that she cannot avoid.

" I have a theory of my own," added the prince, " and it is, that even the most rational people have, unknown to themselves, a little romance in their natures, and to which they must some time or other yield,—it is a toll we must all pay to our imaginations. And I, who certainly am not as wise as Solomon, feel and acknowledge this weakness. My inevitable romance is that young nun, bending before the altar, like an eastern flower torn from its sunny clime, and condemned to languish under an alien sky. She haunts me in my dreams; and often, even by day, do I catch myself making her the idol of my thoughts. I do not love her, but I make her the heroine of my fancy, and build upon my recollection of her gentle loveliness, a thousand 'castles in the air;' but which I immediately destroy with a sigh. I have never seen her since, and will perhaps never see her again: but never—even if I lived a thousand years—could her image be effaced from my mind."

In the beginning of our conversation we had been very gay; but, yielding to the mournful influence of this tale, we had all become very melancholy, especially the countess du Nord, who was always very easily impressed. The prince de Ligne was not accustomed to meet persons so very susceptible. He soon cast off his own gloom, and dissipated ours. The effect of his words and looks was almost magical; he could mould one's thoughts at will.

"Monsieur," said the count du Nord, laughing, "did the Countess Charlotte recognize you under your veil?"

"The little monkey did not pretend to know me, and never spoke to me about it; but she wrote a letter to her mother, in which was this passage:—'I know something about the prince de Ligne; but, if you will allow me, dear mamma, I will not tell it even to you.'"

"That was an intelligent girl!"

"She was, madame; and I can assure you that she has even improved since."

Both the grand-duchess and I wrote down the entire of this conversation, when we retired to our rooms.

9th July.—In the morning we went to visit the Archduchess Christina, and then their imperial and royal highnesses, and their suites, got into a dreikscheid, and, after visiting the port, proceeded up the canal of Bruges, towards Ghent, where we were to pass the night. In this manner we traversed the entire city of Bruges, and found it a most delightful manner of travelling. We dined on board. The conversation all the way was most agreeable. The Princess Christina made a thousand and a thousand inquiries about her beloved sister. The grand-duchess told her of the cup she had been sent by her majesty, and promised to show it to her.

"If you would have no objection, madame, I will ask the queen to send me one as like as possible; it would be a great pleasure for me to possess it."

The countess du Nord made a suitable reply; and, in this agreeable manner, we arrived at Ghent almost without our knowledge. That evening we saw nothing of the city but the theatre, where they performed 'La Clochette' very badly. Provincial actors appear to such disadvantage when one is fresh from Paris.

10*th July*.—We went out early with the Princess Christina to see the city. Their imperial highnesses went incognito to avoid the embarrassments of etiquette and presentations. I saw nothing remarkable here; all Flemish cities have the same appearance, and invariably bear the mark of Spanish rule in the moresque decorations of their buildings, which look rather strange in our northern clime. We then proceeded to Brussels, a beautiful city, where one could get everything, and which almost reminded one of Paris, though so far removed from it. We had scarcely time to change our dress, when we had to go to the theatre to see 'Félix' and 'Les Sabots Perdus.' The countess du Nord asked several times where I found strength to support all this fatigue—I that looked so delicate, and declared that she herself was quite worn out. When we returned from the theatre, the grand-duchess went to bed immediately; but the grand-duke and I, being both very hungry, determined to sit up for supper, notwithstanding our fatigue. We got some very delicious small oysters, fat and tempting, which we were told could only be got in the neighbourhood of Ostend. The grand-duke was very agreeable during supper. I do not remember how it happened that we began to speak of presentiments, dreams, &c., and everybody told some mysterious tale, except the grand-duke, who did not say a word.

"And you, monseigneur," said the prince de Ligne (whom we found before us at Brussels), "have you nothing to tell? Is Russia without the marvellous; have devils and sorcerers failed to cast their spells around you?"

The grand-duke raised his head and said—

"Kourakim knows that I could tell my tale as well as another; but I wish to dispel such recollections, they have annoyed me sufficiently already."

No person spoke, and the prince looking at his friend with a look of real sadness, said—

"Is it not true, Kourakim, that something very strange has happened to me?"

"So strange, monseigneur, that notwithstanding the confidence I feel in whatever you say, I can only look on it as a trick of your imagination."

"It is true, very true, and if Madame d'Oberkirch will promise not to tell it to my wife, I will relate it to you. But I must ask the same secrecy from you, gentlemen," said he, smiling, "for it would be very disagreeable to have a ghost story, in which I played a part, told through all Europe."

We all promised, and I, at least, have faithfully kept my word. If these memoirs ever see light, it will be when the present generation will have passed away, and none will live who could feel interest in the tale. Here it is in the prince's own words:—

"I was one evening, or rather one night, in the streets of St. Petersburg with Kourakim and two servants. We had been together all the evening in my palace, talking and smoking, and we thought to refresh ourselves by an incognito moonlight walk. The weather was not cold, for it was the finest part of our spring; very different, however, from the vernal beauty of more southern countries. Our conversation was neither religious or serious, but, on the contrary, very gay, and Kourakim was uttering jest after jest on the people that we occasionally met. I was preceded by one of the servants, and the other was behind Kourakim, who walked a few steps behind me. The moonlight was so strong that one could read a letter, and consequently the shadows were very dark. As I turned a street, I saw in a doorway a tall, slight man, wrapped up in a cloak like a Spaniard, and with a military hat drawn over his eyes. He appeared to be waiting for some person; and, just as I passed, he stepped out and walked on my left side, but without uttering a word. I could not distinguish a single feature of his face, and it appeared to me that his feet in touching the flags made a very strange sound, as of stone falling upon stone. I was very much surprised at this; but still more when, after a little time, I felt my left side, to which he kept quite close, become icy cold. I shivered, and turning to Kourakim said—

" 'This is a strange companion that we have got.'

" 'What companion?' said he.

" 'This man that is walking at my left hand, and who makes noise enough, I think, to make him remarked.'

"Kourakim opened his eyes with amazement, and declared that there was no person at my left hand.

"'What! do you not see there a man between me and the wall?'

"'Your highness touches the wall itself, and there is not room for any person between you and it.'

"I put out my hand, and did, in fact, feel the stone; but still the man was there, walking in the same step as I, and his foot making a noise like a hammer. I looked at him more attentively than before, and beheld shining from under his hat the most brilliant eyes that I ever saw, before or since: they looked fixedly at me, and almost fascinated me.

"'Ah,' said I to Kourakim, 'I cannot tell you what I feel; but it is something very strange.'

"I trembled, not with fear, but cold; some sensation I cannot describe was penetrating through all my limbs, and it appeared to me that the blood was congealing in my veins. Suddenly, a deep and melancholy voice came from under the cloak that covered his mouth, and said—

"'Paul!'

"Impelled by some unknown power, I mechanically said—

"'What do you want?'

" 'Paul!' said he again; but affectionately, and even more sadly than before. I could not speak. Again he called me by name, and then he stood still: I felt obliged to do the same.

" 'Paul! poor Paul! poor prince!'

" I turned to Kourakim, who had also stopped, and said—

" 'Do you hear?'

" 'Nothing,' said he; 'absolutely nothing.'

" As for me, that voice is still sounding in my ear. I made a desperate effort, and asked this mysterious man who he was, and what he wanted.

" 'Who am I? poor Paul! I am one who feels an interest in you, and who wishes that you would not attach yourself too much to this world, for you will not remain long in it. Live justly, and you will die in peace. Dread remorse,—it is the most bitter punishment of a noble mind.'

" He then resumed his walk, still looking at me with that penetrating eye; and as I had stopped when he stopped, so I felt obliged to go on when he went on. He did not speak, and I did not feel inclined to address him. I followed, for he was now the leader. This continued for more than an hour. I did not know through what places I passed: Kourakim cannot believe it at all. See, how he smiles; he thinks still that this is all a dream.

" At last we drew near the 'Grand Place,' which is between the bridge of the Neva and the palace of the senators. He went straight towards a particular part of the 'Place,' I following of course, and then he stopped.

" 'Adieu, Paul,' said he, 'you will see me here again, and in another place beside.'

" Then his hat rose as of its own accord, and revealed to my astonished gaze the eagle eye, the embrowned forehead, and severe smile of my grandfather, 'Peter the Great.' When I recovered from my fear and surprise, he had disappeared.

" It is on this very spot that the empress is erecting the monument which will soon be the admiration of all Europe. It is an equestrian figure in granite, representing the Czar Peter, and is placed upon a rock. I did not recommend to my mother this place chosen, or rather divined by the phantom; and I do not know how to describe the feeling I experienced when first I saw this statue. *I am afraid of being afraid*, in spite of Prince Kourakim, who wants to persuade me that I dreamed this as I walked along the streets. I remember the least occurrence of this vision; for I still assert that it was one, and can recal every part of it as distinctly as if it only occurred yesterday. When I returned home, my left side was absolutely frozen, and it was several hours before I could feel any heat, although I went into a warm bed, and had a great quantity of bedclothes over me."

"I hope that you think my story a good one, and that you will admit that I did not keep you waiting for it without reason."

"Do you know what that proves, monseigneur?" said the prince de Ligne.

"It proves that I will die young."

"Pardon me if I do not agree with you. I consider that it proves two things incontestably: the first is, that one should not go out at night when one is inclined to sleep; and the second, that one should not go too close to half-frozen walls in a climate like yours. I can draw no other moral from it. The phantom of your illustrious grandfather existed only in your own imagination, and I am certain that your coat was covered on the left side with the dust of the walls."

This story, you may be sure, made a deep impression on us all. Very few persons know it, as the grand-duke would not wish to have it made public. The grand-duchess has not heard it to this day, it would terrify her. When I retired to my room I wrote down this tale at length, as I always did whenever I had anything interesting to inscribe, but for things of lesser moment I only took notes to help my memory.

11th July.—The Archduchess Christina and her husband came at an early hour to escort us through the city. We were shown the lace manufactories, the cathedral, and the Béguin convents. I must give a more lengthened account of these singular communities, which are not anywhere but in Flanders. They are a kind of large cloisters, where religious women reside who do not intend to marry. They live in community, but do not make vows. Those who can work inhabit a house bought by a rich sister, who is obliged to support them at her own expense. The weak and old live in a large house, like a convent, where they are under the authority of a superior, and employed in occupations suitable to their strength or talents. This institution was founded by a priest, named Lebegue, who assembled together some religious women, and inspired them with the desire of leading a life of celibacy, as a means of arriving at greater perfection. This was in the twelfth century. There are Béguinages (as they are called) all through Flanders, but those of Ghent are the most celebrated. These Béguins wear on their heads a particular kind of hood, called a béguin, from which some persons think that their name is derived, but it is just as likely that the head-dress takes its name from the congregation. I was very much interested by our visit to this institution. We spoke with some of these recluses, who were in the most enviable state of placidity and quietude. They felt no interest in anything in this world; their thoughts were all fixed on heaven, and none of the sorrows of this lower sphere can ever approach them. I must acknowledge that such institutions would be an ornament to our Protestant faith; but our merit is the greater, as we can never leave the field of battle, but must combat with our passions until it will please God to call us to himself.

We returned to dress; and as we were to dine at court we were obliged to make a grand toilette. The countess du Nord produced a great sensation both by her beauty and magnificent dress. She wore that day a robe that had been just sent her from Paris by Mdlle. Bertin; it was of lace interwoven with gold, and worn over a slip of silk brocaded with velvet flowers. The trimmings were in themselves a *chef d'œuvre* of millinery art. The palace was very large and handsome, and several centuries old, and very well furnished, but without any extraordinary splendour. The Archduchess Christina was handsome and like our queen, but not so regularly beautiful. She was exceedingly gracious and polite, and did everything in her power to make her guests comfortable. She wore on this day her celebrated pearls, which were certainly the most beautiful in Europe, and became her extremely well. I think pearls far more becoming to the complexion than diamonds; and the ladies of the time of Louis XIV., who were so learned in everything relating to the toilette, never wore any ornaments but pearls, as may be seen from their portraits by Mignard. One of the princess's most beautiful pearls was ill, and at that time under treatment for its health. The countess du Nord told her of a remedy recommended by the schah of Persia to the czarina. I do not remember what it was exactly, but part of it consists in wearing the invalided gem day and night, to restore it to life, for it is said that pearls have life. If that be the case, what are their sensations? One day that I met Madame de Genlis at the duchess of Bourbon's, I suggested to her that the history of a pearl would make a very pretty romance. She said that she would think about writing it, but I do not know whether she has done so or not.

The duke, husband to the Archduchess Christina, is a most amiable and affable prince.

After dinner the entire company drove to the 'Cours,' where there was a great assemblage of people, by whom their imperial highnesses were very well received. In compliment to the countess du Nord all the ambassadors came in gala costume, which, together with the magnificent equipages, produced a very fine effect; it had all the appearance of a triumphal entry. After our drive we visited the princess de Starenberg, and from her palace we went to the Mint, where medals were struck with effigies of the count and countess du Nord, and distributed amongst the visitors. I have mine still; it has on one side profile likenesses of their imperial highnesses, and their names engraved on the exergue; and on the other are the emblems of art and science, peace and war, with these words beneath—'Bruxelles, mense Jul. MDCCLXXXII.'

In the evening we had a ball: the assembly was most brilliant,—ambassadors and their suites, foreign officers, learned men, and beautiful and splendidly-dressed ladies, amongst whom, as usual, the countess du Nord shone pre-eminent. The supper was laid on several small tables, as was the custom at Trianon and Chantilly,—a fashion that is far more social and convenient than those long tables at which one can never feel so much at ease. It was very late when we got home, and I wrote to M. d'Oberkirch before going to bed, by which means I got very little sleep.

12*th July.*—We went in the morning with the Archduchess Christina to visit the factory of the coachbuilder Simon, who was then so much the rage, and made carriages for all the sovereigns of Europe. He showed us one that was just finished for the Archduchess Christina, which was certainly one of the most superb that could be imagined: it had panels of 'Martin enamel,' and was ornamented with the most exquisite carvings, and the most gorgeous gilding. The archduchess told us that those enamelled panels were brought from Vienna, where there were, at least, twelve carriages the same as this.

We next visited the library, where there was an immense collection of works on agriculture, from which extracts were read to us, in which I felt very little pleasure, not being learned in such things.

We had then to dress in haste for a state dinner at court. It turned out to be a most fatiguing piece of ceremonial, which deprived one of all desire to eat. These fine things seemed only a kind of mockery, and I felt as if we ourselves were scarcely human. This wearisome ceremony over, we returned and changed our dresses for more simple, and then went to the theatre, where they performed 'L'Infante' and 'Les Sabots Perdus.' I did not hear a single word the actors said, as I was all the time conversing in the back of the box with the prince de Ligne and M. de la Fermière. The countess du Nord told me that she would very willingly have changed places with me, which I could very easily believe. After the play we visited Vauxhall, and then returned to sup at our hôtel.

This was what may be called a life filled up with important trifles.

Prince Galitzin and M. de Markoff, Russian minister at the Hague, came to receive the orders of their imperial highnesses; but they made no delay, but left Brussels the same day.

13*th July.*—We went to Malines, still accompanied by the duke and archduchess. The countess du Nord bought a quantity of magnificent lace, of which she insisted that I should take a part. She became seriously angry whenever I refused a present from her.

"Lanele," she said, "you do not love me, or you would not be so unkind and disdainful."

She also bought some of those beautiful hangings of gilt leather that are manufactured at Malines; the leather is said to be brought from Spain.

The duke and archduchess escorted their imperial highnesses as far as Antwerp, the last city under their authority. We all dined at the convent of St. Michael, where we were as kindly received as if we were of the same religion as its inhabitants. The people of Antwerp have a passion for pictures, and there are several very beautiful paintings in the churches and the houses of private individuals. We spent more than an hour admiring the 'Descent from the Cross,' by Rubens. How beautiful it is! We saw this day more pictures than would be sufficient to form a large gallery. In the cathedral is a chair of excellently sculptured wood, representing all the animals of the ark. We were next taken to see the river Escaut, which is very imposing and grand. We then returned to the hôtel, where we took leave of the duke and archduchess, who had been most kind and attentive to the count and countess du Nord, and had done everything in their power to make their journey through the cities under their command as agreeable as possible. We were now to enter Holland, where new honours were awaiting the illustrious travellers. For my part I was beginning to be heartily tired of all this state and ceremony, and sighed for my own quiet home and the caresses of my child. I most sincerely pity princes.

CHAPTER V.

Entrance into Holland—We travel in three divisions—Friendship of the count du Nord for Prince Kourakim—M. de Krusse—M. de la Fermière—We cross an arm of the sea—Prince Galitzin—The prince and princess of Orange—Tulip mania—The wooden house—Tastes of the stadtholder—Fête—Mdlle. de Merverkerke—The duke de Vangugon—Dispute about precedence—The Hollanders—Celebrated garden—Reliance of the count du Nord—M. Reindeck—Saardam—Souvenir of Peter the Great—M. Forth Lowen—The Hollanders and Voltaire—The Count Goloffkin—The lost supper—The drunken postilions—The count of Romanzoff—The prince-bishop of Liège—The duke and duchess of Gloucester—Spa—Princess Antoinette of Hesse—Aix-la-Chapelle—The little angel—Beneficence of the count du Nord—Landgrave of Hesse Cassel—Arrival of the princes Louis and Eugene of Wurtemberg—The resident nobility—Number of princes—I meet my husband and daughter—Return to Alsace—The storks.

It is unnecessary to say that the count and countess du Nord, as well as the persons of their suite, were well received in the towns where they stopped. Crowds thronged the ways through which they were to pass. The streets around the hôtels where they slept were so crowded, that there was a perpetual murmur heard like the humming of a hive of bees. As they travelled incognito, they received none but persons who could aid them in attaining the object of their journey, that of seeing objects worthy of their attention.

The party had been travelling some days in three divisions, on account of the great number of horses needed. In the first division, in which were their imperial highnesses, I was the only lady, and the gentlemen were, Prince Kourakim, friend of the count du Nord, colonel Beckendorf, who had the care of the expenditure; M. de Krusse, physician; and M. de la Fermière, secretary to the count du Nord. The prince de Kourakim has, since his infancy, been always with the grand-duke. He had accompanied him in a journey into Prussia, as well as in this. He is a man of merit, but very grave. The prince loves him tenderly, and does not hide anything from him; his affection for the prince is most sincere.

"I love him," he used sometimes to say to the grand-duchess, "as much as you love Madame d'Oberkirch."*

M. de la Fermière was big and fat, though a man of great talent. He had conceived a great admiration for me, and the countess du Nord often jested about this passion, which she pretended to believe that he entertained, and which, she said, a profound respect prevented him of declaring. She often recurred to this joke, and called him *my chaste lover*. The truth is that I esteemed his talents highly, and was always glad to converse with him when the opportunity offered. He was one of the best men in the world, and perfectly guileless. The grand-duke and the grand-duchess were in high sprits during the journey. Each spent part of the morning in writing a journal. These productions were often read aloud, and excited great laughter, as a thousand ridiculous events were recorded there.

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* He signed the peace of Tilsit, and was ambassador in France until 1812. He was a descendant of Boim Kourakim, brother-in-law to Peter the Great.—*Note by the Editor.*

They had an excellent travelling carriage, which could accommodate two persons; it was furnished with every possible convenience, and when they wished to be alone, they travelled in this. M. de Beckendorf, M. de la Fermière, and Schneider travelled in mine. M. de la Fermière, as I have said, was a man of talent, of extensive information, and consequently of great intellectual resources, which he did not fail to draw upon in conversation. He was a living library. He was acquainted with the history of the smallest village that we passed through. The count du Nord often applied to him for information.

13*th July*.—We set off during the night, and arrived next day at Mordeck, a little village at the mouth of the Meuse. Our carriages were sent by land to Utrecht, where we would find them, it being the intention of their imperial highnesses to travel through Holland. We embarked at Mordeck with all our suite, in four yachts, which the stadtholder and the states-general had sent to meet the illustrious travellers, to bring them on their way as far as Rotterdam. As it was necessary to cross an arm of the sea, to enter into the Meuse, we encountered some strong blasts that prevented the anchor being raised, and which caused almost every one on board an attack of sea-sickness. M. de la Fermière was in a frightful state; and the grand-duchess assured me very seriously, in the midst of her own sufferings, that at that moment I had no need to dread the impetuosity of his passion for me. When we recovered from our illness, we laughed heartily at the grimaces we had made whilst the attack lasted.

The yachts were furnished with everything we could desire, either for the table or for any other department; everything bore the mark of royal hospitality. We were waited on by the people of the stadtholder, cooks, butlers, &c. We set off on the 14th, and entered the Meuse, which is bordered on the right and left by cities, villages, cultivated fields, and smiling gardens. It is a delightful prospect. The evening was lovely. We talked a long time, and often regretted the prince de Ligne.

This land of Holland is very beautiful, but has peculiar characteristics. The Dutch blood does not seem to be like ours. There is a calmness, an absence of passion, and a tranquillity on these honest flat faces, that I could not attempt to describe. M. de la Fermière said,—

"It is not blood, it is milk that flows in the veins of these women; they resemble a pot of their own good cream, very white, and set in a polished and well-scoured vessel."

Prince Galitzin, the Russian minister at the Hague, came to meet their imperial highnesses, and remained with them all the time of their sojourn in Holland. He spoke little, either through timidity or respect, and did not contribute much to the general gaiety. We had a favourable wind all day.

I remained long on deck; the night was so beautiful that I could scarcely prevail on myself to go to bed. The universal calm that reigned around gave sublimity to the scene, and raised the mind towards heaven. Nothing was to be heard but the beating of the waves against the sides of the vessel, or the cry of the frogs that held their midnight revel on the shore. From time to time the silence was broken by the striking of a distant clock that tolled the hour, or the barking of a farm-dog. But for these sounds, the land, in the deep silence of the night, might have seemed a desert. Oh ! how often have I recalled the memory of that hour, where beneath that clear sky, the smallest blade of grass was made distinctly visible by the voluptuous light of the silvery moon ! I tore myself from the contemplation of that lovely scene. I retired to rest, but the loveliest vision that fancy ever wove in sleep, could not equal the realities I had left.

15*th July.*—The anchor was weighed at eight in the morning, and as wind and tide were against us, we were obliged to tack, which delayed us so that we did not reach Rotterdam until noon. The entrance to the city from this side forms a superb *coup-d'œil.* On disembarking we were received by the prince and princess of Orange, who came to receive their guests. They conducted us to our carriages, in which we made the tour of the city, which presents something very original, with its canal and its trees. From the walks around the suburbs one sees on every side houses covered with foliage and flowers, and ornamented with statues and gilded vases. After this drive we returned by water, *en dreckscheid*, still making our way to the Hague. This mode of travelling is much less fatiguing and more interesting than travelling by land in coaches: one sees the country much better travelling by canal.

We passed before Ryswick, celebrated by the treaty signed there by Louis XIV. and the belligerent powers. We stopped at Delft, a pretty little town, where we were presented with baskets of flowers. Unfortunately the season for tulips was passed. We saw a tulip-fancier, who possessed slips and roots to the amount of several thousand livres. All the churches of Holland are simple; they appear plain even to our Protestant eyes, that had gazed upon the basilic of the Catholic worship, generally so gorgeous and majestic. Chinese porcelain is to be found in this country in great quantities, of every form, from the hideous ape to the tiny tea-cup.

We arrived at the Hague at about seven in the evening. The prince and princess of Orange came to conduct us to the 'Maison des bois,' where they pass the summer, and which is at some distance from the Hague. We were invited to a grand concert. All the diplomatic body was present, but we felt so fatigued that we were much inclined to doze. As soon as we could escape, we hastened to our hôtel in the city, where we slept during, I believe, twelve hours.

M. de la Fermière said that the Dutch conversation and addresses were very somniferous in their effects. However this may be, listening for three hours to congratulatory addresses and verses had fatigued us more than three days' continuous excursions through Paris would have done. These verses, I must confess, are generally very difficult of digestion.

16*th July.*— The prince and princess of Orange came at eleven o'clock to take us to see the stadtholder's magnificent cabinet of natural history, which is in the city palace: it is one of the most complete in existence. He has not a passion either for tulips, nor pictures, nor china monsters; but as a Dutchman must have some mania, he has been blessed with a predilection for stuffed beasts.

After having seen these curiosities, we returned to dress for a grand court gala. This dinner was still more wearisome than all the public dinners we had undergone since our departure from Paris.

Dutch mirth is not gay. Scarcely had we dined, when we stepped into our carriages to go to see 'all the rest,' as the countess du Nord said. We afterwards went to the theatre: 'L'Amant Jaloux,' and 'Aristote Bridé,' were performed. I expected 'Sabots Perdus,' with which we had been so perseveringly regaled since our entrance into the Low Countries; but on this occasion we were favoured with a dispensation. We were obliged to change our dresses again to go to the comedy, after which we again dressed *en lévite* to return to the 'Maison des bois,' where a fête had been prepared. The entire wood was magnificently illuminated. Shops were fitted up in different parts, where the commodities were bestowed *gratis*, in imitation of the fêtes of Louis XIV. Several large well-furnished tables were laid out for the service of the guests.

The table at which we sat was placed in a newly-erected pavilion, lighted up with the brilliancy of a fairy palace, and furnished in a style and taste which Holland only could have produced.

We walked for an hour before supper to see the shops and illuminations. Music was heard from the time we sat to supper, and the evening closed with a ball. There were a great many pretty women present, though all rather heavy and rather fat. A charming specimen of Dutch beauty had been seen in Paris in the person of Madame Mervenkerke, first known as Madame Pater. She caused a revolution in the world of beauty towards the close of the reign of Lous XV., and received the homage of all the men of Paris. She was near being married to no less a personage than the prince de Lambèse, one of the house of Lorraine, but afterwards chose M. de Champénatres. It is said that she was secretly loved by Louis XV., and shook the influence of Madame Dubarry for an instant, at least. Though Dutch, she bore the slightest possible traces of the characteristics of her country. She had small hands, small feet, a piquante countenance, and handsome features: she did not resemble a pot of cream. I never saw her, but I have heard her much talked of.

The French envoy at the Hague was the duke de la Vauguyon: he was afterwards ambassador. His mother was a Breteuil. The countess du Nord did not appear at court to dispute about precedency. There are some points on which the envoys of the king will not yield to foreigners, and they are perfectly right: it ought to be and always has been so. Madame de Vauguyon, *née* Mdlle. de Pons de Rochefort, was maid-of-honour to Madame, and enjoyed the privilege of *entrée* at Versailles. I do not know upon what point of etiquette the court of the stadtholder would not yield, but certain it is that Madame de Vauguyon will not yield either.

The Hague is a beautiful city, built very regularly. Dutch cleanliness exceeds all that has been said of it. Everything, even to the humblest utensil, comes polished from the hands of the good housewives of this land. It is really agreeable to see all that. This country produces the most wearisome effect upon me: I do not think that I could ever become accustomed to it. I believe that the Dutch never laugh, excepting when they have drunk five or six pots of beer, and then, what gaiety! I would prefer their most phlegmatic mood.

17*th July*.—We set off *en voiture* for Amsterdam; the suite went by water. We stopped at the 'Maison des bois' to take leave of the prince and princess of Orange. The countess du Nord was anxious to thank them for their attentions. Prince Galitzin and I travelled in the carriage with their imperial highnesses. We remarked lovely promenades, all unfrequented. The Dutch prefer their public-houses, where they pass their time in drinking a little coffee, a great deal of tea, and enormous quantities of beer.

I was delighted with Haarlem. We remained there several hours to admire the beautiful garden, and to see the gardener who is celebrated throughout Europe. Unfortunately several species of flowers were out of season, but there still remained enough to give us an idea of what the garden must be when in full bloom. The perfume that pervaded these flower-knots and walks was delicious. The gardener showed us different kinds of plants with which we were unacquainted, amongst others a shrub that produces magnificent flowers, of which the leaves are soft as velvet, but odourless. He told us that it was called the Chinese rose, and had been imported within the last year with great care. Roses of this species may, in fact, be seen delineated on screens and in the corners of fans.

Haarlem is situated on the borders of a lake. All around is verdant and enlivening, and the country along our route to Amsterdam bore nearly the same character. We arrived in this latter city towards evening. The concourse of people who crowded to see their imperial highnesses was prodigious. This thronging seemed to me more insupportable in Holland than elsewhere. I do not know what their highnesses thought of it. We were very well lodged, and the duchess, tempted by a good bed, retired to rest almost immediately on arriving. She was really fatigued by all this display. The grand-duke, on the contrary, declared that he was quite fresh, and insisted on supping with me, and was wonderfully gay.

" Well," said he, suddenly, " Madame d'Oberkirch, you do not tell a ghost story this evening."

" You, monseigneur, relate them much better than I."

" Well, did I not take you in nicely? the more surprising the story was, the more wonderful is it that you took it seriously."

" What! monseigneur, is it not true?"

" Oh, no! it is not true; it was never true; it is a story stupid enough to make one fall asleep standing, that I invented to frighten you a little. You may repeat it if you wish."

I understood what that meant; I made no remark, but looked at the prince, who understood the expression of my eyes, rose, took my hand, kissed it, and said :—

" I was joking, baroness. I know that you would not mention it if it were true, but as it is only a story you may jest about it, but not with the grand-duchess. You know as well as I that such things are not to be mentioned to her even in jest."

" I will not speak of this adventure to any one since you, monseigneur, desire it."

" But it is not an adventure; do not think it, it is a piece of folly, an extravagance that I invented to amuse myself; do not give credit to it."

" I will take care not to do so."

Since this time the grand-duke has once or twice alluded to this anecdote, and was evidently sorry for having related it. He wished to persuade me that it was all a joke. I cannot on this account say positively that it is true, though I have my private opinion on the matter. The grand-duke saw or believed he saw this vision. He often blushed for this belief, and thence arose his contradictions. As to me I am convinced of the truth of the vision.

18*th July.*—We set off at nine in the morning to visit the city, where we saw a great number of beautiful edifices; amongst others, the admiralty-house, the dockyards, the port, the royal exchange, and I know not how many others. In the houses of several private individuals we saw pictures by the great Flemish and Italian masters. The Dutch are very fond of paintings. To finish the day's excursions, though we were already very much fatigued, we went to the ware-rooms of a dealer in porcelain and other India imports. Here their imperial highnesses made many purchases. We were all this day accompanied by M. Reindeck, *bourgomestre* of the city, a man of considerable talent, much information, and very agreeable manners. Prince Galitzin and Prince Goloffkin were also in our cortége. When we returned in the evening everybody retired to rest, scarcely tasting supper.

19*th July.*—This day has been very interesting to their imperial highnesses. We went to Saardam, to visit *the relics* of Peter the Great. This is a charming little village. The extraordinary neatness and gaiety that prevail there make it a most agreeable residence. We entered with a feeling of respect into the little house or hut that Peter had occupied. It consisted of a single chamber with a little recess, where there still remained a little of the curtain that had surrounded his bed. We saw in the dockyards the place where he usually worked, when laying aside his royal dignity he studied in a foreign land the construction of ships, that he might be able to establish a navy in his own kingdom. The grand-duke was profoundly touched by these recollections; he has great veneration for his illustrious ancestor, and has often told us that he would take him as a model in governing his kingdom. M. Reindeck accompanied us to-day again: he had got a yacht prepared in which we returned, quickly favoured by wind and tide. We now took a different kind of boat, a *dreckscheid*, to return by canal to Utrecht. *Dreckscheids* are covered boats, built very low for the purpose of passing through the cities under the bridges. The interior is very well furnished and arranged, but is not high enough to allow the passengers to stand upright.

We enjoyed as we passed along the prospect of a smiling country and lovely gardens. We stopped at Hunthun, the residence of M. Fort Löwen. It is a perfect gem. The house is very large, the gardens delightful, filled with the rarest flowers, arranged with admirable taste. The plantations are renowned throughout Holland, and persons come from great distances to carry off shoots. Lady Lockhart has a habitation at Martzen, where she received us very kindly. The Lockharts are an ancient Scotch family, of whom one member was ambassador from Cromwell to the court of France. The count du Nord, who is very well informed, did not fail to make a delicate allusion to this personage.

Throughout Holland the houses, cities, villages, gardens are all, generally speaking, fashioned on one model. The person who has seen one has seen all, so perfect is the likeness. The spirit of excessive neatness, which will not allow a particle of dust to rest upon anything, gives to every object a lustre that cannot be found elsewhere. We arrived at Utrecht in the evening. This city possesses the same beauties that the other cities of Holland do, with one exception, that the Rhine announces that here we reach the boundaries of a country, to which M. de Voltaire on quitting it addressed these celebrated words:—

> Adieu canards, canaux, canaille.*

20*th July*.—The Prince Galitzin and the count de Goloffkin took leave of the count and countess du Nord. We proceeded on our way, and crossed four rivers *en barque* before arriving at Bar le Duc, where the duke of Brunswick, who is lieutenant-general in the service of Holland, resides. The duke had prepared a very elegant collation for their imperial highnesses. A ridiculous accident prevented M. de Beckendorf, M. de la Fermière, and me of being present at this repast. The count and countess du Nord had set out from Utrecht in their carriage 'à deux.' We followed as usual in ours. I do not know who had been amusing himself in making the postilions drink, but they were as drunk as lords and could scarcely hold the reins. We laughed at first at all this, which contributed to our gaiety.

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* Farewell ducks, canals, and rabble.

"We will stop at Bois le Duc," said M. de la Fermière to them, "and nowhere else. Do you understand?"

Whether it was that they did not understand, or whether they had some reason for taking us on further, I know not; but they galloped through Bois le Duc without answering our questions, and continued to proceed at full speed until they reached a little village three leagues beyond, where they stopped before the door of a kind of inn, above which dangled a blackened and weather-beaten sign. What was the horror of M. de la Fermière on discovering that the resting-place which our worthy guides had chosen afforded no better refreshment than bread and butter! However, we recovered our spirits, laughed heartily, and were much gayer, as we learned afterwards, than those who partook of the brilliant banquet that we missed. We slept at Endhowen, where an excellent supper consoled us for our bread-and-butter dinner.

21*st July*.—We were to pass the night at Maestricht. We travelled very fast. We passed this day also in our carriage *de suite*, but M. de la Fermière kept a close eye on the conduct of the postilions. It rained very hard, and we were all a little out of humour. We could not go to see anything at Maestricht. I do not know why it is that none of the cities in Holland or the Low Countries pleased me. We were all impatient to arrive in Germany, the more especially as it was there that we expected to meet again those we loved best. The countess du Nord spoke incessantly of her parents, and I thought of my daughter, of M. d'Oberkirch, and of my father. I reckoned the days that should elapse before I should embrace them, and thanked God that they were not many.

22*nd July*.—We quitted Maestricht in the midst of heavy rain, and took the route to Liege, where we were to dine, and where we were expected by the count de Romanzoff, so celebrated by his great exploits, and who stood high in the favour of Catherine II. The count de Romanzoff is a near relative to the countess de Bruce, of whom I have spoken. He dined with us, and made a present to their imperial highnesses of an enormous fish caught in the Meuse.

The bishop of Liege is prince of the empire; his chapter admits as members only nobles or doctors. It is composed of sixty canons, the dignitaries included. The count de Walbruck was at that time bishop of Liege. He exercises an absolute sovereignty over the territory dependent on his bishoprick suffragan of Cologne; he enjoyed an income of eight or nine thousand livres; he takes place in the third rank in the circle of Westphalia. This ecclesiastical city has a conventual air, which adds nothing to its attractions. We set off early en route to Spa, where we were to pass the night.

Immediately after our arrival, the archduchess and the duke of Saxe-Teschen, who had come expressly to see their imperial highnesses, repaired to their hôtel. This meeting was more than gracious; it was almost friendly. These august princes had harmonized admirably with each other during the few days they had passed together.

The same evening we all went to the Salon, where all the strangers were assembled. The numbers were prodigious; and the countess du Nord was, as usual, the object of general admiration. The duke and duchess of Gloucester came to pay their respects to their imperial highnesses. The duchess of Gloucester is sister-in-law to King

George III. Her name is Margaret Waldegrave. She was widow of the count de Waldegrave when the duke of Gloucester married her. It was a marriage of inclination; the prince is, however, it is said, on very good terms with his august brother.

We met at Spa many ladies from Paris. This place is beginning to be fashionable. There is a good deal of amusement, gambling, dancing, and promenading. There are very few sick persons here. I do not know whether the waters are efficacious in removing maladies, but certainly every face that I saw was blooming with health.

I experienced here a very agreeable surprise. The Princess Antoinette de Hesse Rhenfels Rothembourg had come to Spa expressly to meet me. This is the same princess whose acquaintance I had made at Montbéliard the preceding year, and of whom I have already spoken, and who, as I have said, had been so good as to conceive a great affection for me. She is sister to the princess de Bouillon, and sister-in-law to the landgravine of Hesse-Rothembourg. She was, at the time of which I speak, twenty-nine years of age. The grand-duchess received her with great kindness; and had the amiability to say that she should become jealous of her if she had not known me so long, and if the antiquity of our friendship did not reassure her. For my part, I was quite confused at seeing these princesses so much concerned about so humble a personage as I.

23*rd July*.—We went to visit the fountains La Pouhon, La Sauvenière, outside the city. The country about is handsome enough, though deficient in foliage. At eleven o'clock we went to breakfast with the archduchess. She had invited all the strangers to the Salon. More than a hundred persons sat to table. The *coup-d'œil* was striking. The dresses were very tasteful. The company sat long, and drank a great deal of Rhenish wine, so that when dinner was announced at our hôtel, not one of the party was inclined to do honour to it. After dinner we made a visit to the archduchess, and to the duke of Gloucester. The countess du Nord was very much fatigued and wearied to death from these continual public ceremonies. The same evening we went to the theatre. The interior of the building is pretty. The 'Jealous Lover' was performed by a very mediocre company. The count de Romanzoff came also to the theatre; he was very agreeable, and contributed not a little to make us forget the performers, whose fierce gesticulations and provincial manners afforded us little amusement.

24*th July*.—We breakfasted again with the archduchess, but *en petit comité*, as we came to take leave. It was very early. We felt some regret at parting from this excellent princess, who had been so kind to us; I say us, for she overwhelmed me with attentions. We dined at Verviers, which is in the bishoprick of Liege, and where we partook of the best dinner that had been presented to us since the commencement of our tour. We had, amongst other things, excellent oysters. M. de la Fermière is not insensible to the pleasures of the table. The prince often jests upon this subject; however, he takes pleasure in setting before him whatever he likes best in this respect. The prince's attentions to all the persons of his household are unceasing: it is a pleasure to serve such a master.

We passed the night at Aix-la-Chapelle: it is a free imperial city, where, in ancient times, the emperors were crowned. When the ceremony took place in another city, which sometimes occurred, the Bible was sent from Aix-la-Chapelle, as well as the relics of St. Stephen and the sword of Charlemagne, whose body reposes in the collegiate church of Nôtre Dame. We went to see the emperor's tomb, and stood before it penetrated with a sentiment of profound veneration: the grand-duke appeared very thoughtful.

"This is all that remains of human glory and power," said he; "a name which may be remembered for a short time, and a few feet of earth.

Oh, how far preferable are our household loves! they make us better here below, and happier hereafter."

The grand-duchess was touched by these words, which the expressive glance of the prince addressed to her.

The collegiate church has twenty-four canons and capitulars. The emperor is a canon. At the moment that we came out of the church, one of the children attached to the choir, and who was attending the clergyman engaged in doing the honours to their imperial highnesses, gave an affectionate salute to a poor woman who was sitting at the foot of a column. She held upon her knees a crippled child covered with a few rags. The grand-duke, whose glance nothing can escape, saw the sign of recognition, and observed the poverty of the poor woman: he stopped, and asked if this child was hers. The poor creature, astonished at being addressed by so great a personage, appeared stupified, and neither rose nor answered. The canon repeated the question a little more sharply.

"Softly, softly, M. Canon," said the prince, "do not embarrass this poor woman; she will comprehend better in a minute. Is this child yours, my good woman?"

"Oh yes, sir, it is indeed mine! but it would not be alive now but for that little angel that is standing there behind his reverence."

Every eye was now turned towards the little choir-boy, who drew back quite ashamed.

"Do not be ashamed of performing a good action," said the prince. "Come, tell us what this child has done for you, and we will see if there be any means of recompensing him, by aiding him in his work of charity. Is he a relation of yours?"

"No, sir, he is not a relation; but I love him as much as I do my daughter."

And then the poor woman, who had quite recovered from her embarrassment, related how, on Palm-Sunday, she was returning from the gate of the church, where she had been asking alms, and how she found herself and her little daughter entangled amid a crowd of carriages belonging to the bishop of Liege, who officiated on that day. Very much alarmed, she attempted to run, her foot slipped, she fell on the pavement, and her child was thrown forward at some paces distant. The little girl's arm was broken, and she would have been trampled under foot by the horse were it not for little Hans, who sprang towards her, and bore her away at the peril of his own life. Since that day he shared with the mother and daughter the fruits of his labours: himself an orphan, and without relations, he adopted those that Providence had sent him, and endeavoured to support those whose lives he had saved. He was bound to a wheelwright, and earned fifteen sous per day, besides what he gained at the chapter. All his earnings were given to his adopted mother; but as the little girl had never recovered the effects of her accident, the entire was expended at the apothecary's in drugs. He had scarcely enough to eat, and was almost destitute of clothing; but the generous Hans cheerfully submitted to every privation. The grand-duchess, with tearful eyes, poured the contents of her purse into the apron of the poor woman; who, having never before seen so much money, thought that it was all a dream.

"I am sure that in doing this, I recompense Hans more largely than if I gave him twice that sum for himself. But he shall not be forgotten."

Their imperial highnesses purchased for Hans the establishment of a wheelwright, which was to be worked for him until he should be of an age to undertake the management of it himself.

I should never come to an end, were I to relate all the acts of goodness of this dear princess and her august spouse. Their every step was marked by some act of benevolence, and their names were invoked with blessings wherever they had once appeared.

25th July.—We left Aix-la-Chapelle early, that we may dine at Juliers, and pass the night at Dusseldorf. The elector has one of the most beautiful picture-galleries in Europe, which we did not fail to visit.

26th July.—We set off at five in the morning; passed hastily through Cologne, where we only stayed to visit the cathedral. We dined at Bonn, and slept at Coblentz. I merely name these cities, where nothing remarkable befel us, as I wish to abridge this journal, which I fear is becoming somewhat stupid.

27th July.—We set out at the same hour as on yesterday morning, and crossed the Rhine. We dined at Seltzer, celebrated for those excellent springs, of which the waters are sent into all parts of Europe. We visited these springs, and drank with much pleasure at the fountain-head. We at length arrived at Frankfort-on-Maine, where we were received by the Princes Louis and Eugene de Wurtemberg, brothers to the grand-duchess, and by the landgravine of Hesse Cassel, her aunt. This lady is a princess of Brandenburg-Schwelt, and sister to the princess de Montbéliard. She is godmother to my daughter, and was, at the time of which I speak, thirty-seven years of age.

This meeting was a source of great joy. We saw again the count de Romanzoff, whose diplomatic residence is at Frankfort. Our supper that evening was very gay. Prince Eugene, who is very lively, gave us descriptions of the visitors, who may be expected the following day, that put us into roars of laughter. The news of the arrival of the grand-duke made all the neighbouring nobility issue from their castles. The Prince Eugene said to his sister,

" There is amongst these a stock of dresses, coats, and carriages, that has not seen the light these forty years. I assure you, sister, that all this will form the most amusing page in your journal. I have seen some that would form a study for a painter; and that I would not miss to-morrow for the world. Lay in a stock of gravity, for the provocations to laughter will not be few."

We went to bed very late after having—I will not say exhausted, but scarcely commenced, the conversation that was so interesting to us all, and read the letters that the princes had brought. The countess du Nord was impatiently expected at Montbéliard. It can be easily supposed that her impatience to arrive there was not less great.

28*th July*.—To-day brought us even a greater number of visitors than Prince Eugene had anticipated.

In the first place, there arrived a numerous company of princes from Hesse-Darmstadt, Hanau, Homburg, Mecklenburg, Saxe-Coburg, Nassau, &c.; these dined and supped with their imperial highnesses. They were all relatives, more or less nearly connected. Etiquette in these little courts is as punctiliously strict as in the greatest; and the German susceptibility renders the observance of forms still more important. The countess du Nord had the good fortune not to make the slightest mistake, and accorded to each the consideration that his rank or personal merit could claim. I remarked a dowager from—I really forget what principality—who took her place beside the countess du Nord, and who seemed desirous of being told what the great Catherine did from morning to night.

"At what hour does she rise, madame?"

"Well, madame, what does she do afterwards?"

"At what hour does she eat, madame?"

"Pray, madame, does she remain up late at night?"

"May I ask, madame, since you seem so anxious to inquire into the empress' mode of life, whether it is your intention to imitate her in everything?"

"In everything! I could not say that; but, at least, in everything that I could."

Prince Eugene and Prince Louis could not stand it longer; they were obliged to turn aside to laugh.

The grand-duke preserved an admirable sang froid, and found an opportunity of saying something graceful and agreeable on this subject.

In the course of the day there was a great ball at Vauxhall, where everybody was announced, and presented to their imperial highnesses.

Amongst this resident nobility—so respectable and so ancient—there were some who, having never quitted their castles, were strangers to the customs of court. The provincial nobility in France, however remote from the capital, have some acquaintance with court etiquette, and are never wholly ignorant of the changes of fashion and costume. The governors of provinces receive company, and the baronial castles are often the residence of ladies from Versailles. There is an intercourse more or less immediate; but here it was quite different; so that more than once a costume, or an entrance, provoked a smile spite of our best resolves.

After the ball, we passed through the city to see the public buildings. These sight-seeing promenades are often very fatiguing to those who make them, and very wearisome to those to whom they are narrated.

29*th July.*—We went to Frankfort, and dined at Darmstadt, with the hereditary prince of Hesse Darmstadt. The landgravine of Hesse Cassel accompanied the count and countess du Nord thus far. All the family of the hereditary Prince and Princess George was assembled. Prince George is nephew to the reigning landgrave; he was precisely my age, but appeared to be much older, as the grand-duchess said.

We were carried about, as usual, to see everything. The only object that I think worth speaking of, is a species of gymnasium, or salle d'exercise, of which the wood-work is self-supported. It is, perhaps, the largest in Europe, and is certainly a magnificent building.

In the evening we set out for Manheim, where we were to sleep. It was a mere repetition of our usual routine.

30*th July.*—On leaving Manheim, we stopped at Schwetzingen to visit one of the most charming gardens in the world; it was a combination of the French and English styles. The surrounding country, indeed the palatinate in general, is magnificent. The dinner was at Spire; we crossed the Rhine there, and arrived *at last* at Lauterbourg, where I had the happiness of meeting my husband and daughter. I need not say how great was my joy. I presented my daughter to her godmother, the grand-duchess, who caressed her with a tenderness that touched my heart.

Marshal de Contactes, commander-in-chief in

Alsace, had sent Baron Hahn, attached-colonel of the Anhalt regiment, to receive the orders of the count and countess du Nord, on the subject of their journey and their abode in Strasburg. Their imperial highnesses replied that, in order to arrive a day sooner at Montbéliard, they would go on directly, and not visit Strasburg until their return; merely passing through the town this time. I was happy and, *par conséquence*, took everything in good part.

31*st July*.—We dined at Strasburg, without receiving the customary honours; that is to say, the eternal visits and presentations; and we passed the night at Colmar, of which the count du Nord admired the site very much. He regretted that he had not time to visit our beautiful mountains, and to examine the noble ruins that crown their summits at some distance from the city. He witnessed at Colmar a strange incident, which I cannot forbear recording here.

On the roof of the cathedral there had been placed a wheel, laid cross-wise, as an inducement to storks to build their nests there. This is a custom throughout Alsace, it being a popular opinion in that part of the country that these birds are harbingers of good luck. The storks had not failed to come, and from the windows of our inn we saw the sombre profile of a parent bird standing out in strong relief against the evening sky, then reddened by the setting sun. A brood of young storks was grouped around the parent, that stood upright upon its great claws. None in the nest slept; it was evident that they awaited an absent one, some straggler perhaps, and from time to time we heard their wild and disagreeable cry.

At length we perceived on the verge of the horizon a stork, with outspread wings, cleaving the air with arrowy swiftness, and closely pursued by a bird of prey of prodigious size, probably a vulture from the neighbouring mountains. The stork was frightened, wounded perhaps, and the cries of those in the nest responded to the parent's cry. We saw the poor frightened bird arrive straight over its nest, and fall there exhausted either by fatigue or pain. The other stork then took her companion's place, and sprang towards the enemy. A fierce combat commenced; the two champions rushed upon one another, uttering terrific cries. But the glorious instinct of paternity displayed itself with incredible strength and energy in the stork. Whilst defending herself or attacking her gigantic adversary, she never for an instant lost sight of her little ones that lay trembling and terrified in the nest beneath, but tried continually to cover them with her wings. At length, too weak to sustain an unequal combat, by a desperate effort she approached her branch-formed nest, where lay her expiring mate and the young ones, yet unable to take wing. She caught the nest in her bill, shook it forcibly, and turned it over, dashing from the top of the tower the objects of her affection rather than see them fall a prey to their enemy; then devoting herself singly, a resigned victim, she fell upon the wheel, where, with a blow of his beak, the vulture terminated her existence.

We were all touched to the heart by the sight of this combat and this defence. To use an expression then in fashion, it was a real family tragedy. The count du Nord especially seemed as much interested and excited as if he had been looking on a strife between two mail-clad warriors.

CHAPTER VI.

Return to Etupes and Schweighausen—Reception—Madame Hendel again—The count du Nord—The reigning duke—Fête at Montbéliard—Inauguration of the statue of Peter the Great –Departure for Switzerland—Monument at Etupes—Verses by Florian—I go to my father —He receives the princes and their suite—Count Wartensleben—Prince and princess de Holstein—Duke and duchess of Deux Ponts—Prince Max—Princess Christina of Saxe—Clock of the cathedral at Strasburg—M. Blessing—Cupid transformed into Mars—Duel between M. de Schomberg and Baron Lefort—Verses—Superior officers —Rastadt—Margrave of Baden—The celebrated Todi—The impromptu house—Les fêtes Thessaliennes—Nobility and counts of the empire—Countess Hohenheim —Visit to Hohenheim—English village—M. de la Fermière disguised as a windmill—The 'Solitude'—' L'Irwisch'—Splendid hunt—Affectionate letters—Mdlle. de Cramm again—We set out for Strasburg—Reflections.

1st *August.*—THE count and countess du Nord, with the princes Louis and Eugene of Wurtemberg, left Colmar at an early hour for Etupes, where they were expected with impatience, and where they hoped to surprise the assembled family at table. M. d'Oberkirch and I set out for Schweighausen to see my father, who was delighted to have me home again. How happy I was to find myself again in my dear Alsace, that all the pomps and pleasures of a court could not make me forget! How many charms does one find in her natal land; how beautiful did I think our mountains, and how glorious the half-ruined tombs of our ancestors! With what lively emotion I re-entered Schweighausen, and embraced my father, whom I had the happiness of finding in excellent health. He made me give him an account of all my travels and adventures; and it was with regret that I was obliged to leave him after dinner, as we had promised to go that evening to Etupes.

The moment that our carriage was seen, all this illustrious and excellent family came out to meet us with as much eagerness and delight as if we were their nearest and dearest relations. The countess du Nord was the first to embrace me, and leading me to her mother, said,—

"Dear mother, here is Mdlle. Lane, that would not have come back to you if I had not brought her myself."

The princess de Montbéliard did me the honour of embracing me several times, whilst laughing at her daughter's gaiety, though she was as much moved by our meeting as I, and that was not a little. I was then embraced by every one of the family in succession, who father, mother, children, sons and daughters-in-law, made altogether seventeen persons. They were the image of the most perfect unity and happiness that could exist on the earth, and it was a real pleasure to behold their innocent and affectionate gaiety.

We also found Madame de Beckendorf, who had preceded us to Montbéliard, still ill, but could never weary of praising the kindness and attention of her noble hosts. Madame Hendel soon made her appearance when she heard of my arrival, and made me three profound reverences worthy of a court. She wore a dress of flame-coloured silk, so very bright that it attracted the grand-duke, who asked if it were an auto-da-fè costume. She replied that she did not understand Latin, but that this was her bridal-dress, which she never put on but on very solemn occasions. The countess du Nord had brought her a quantity of presents; nor had I forgotten her. Her head was almost turned by such a quantity of fine things, and all the cares attendant on such a number of distinguished guests. She guided the entire establishment as of old, and I do believe that she was quite capable of imitating Vatek, if even one of the humblest servants had been in want of anything necessary to the dignity of the house. She was absolutely intoxicated with delight at the presence of the grand-duke and duchess. She bought a map of Russia, and every spare moment she ran to look at it.

"She will be mistress of all that," she would say, passing her finger round the boundaries of that vast empire. Every morning she went to the princess's room, who encouraged her to chatter like a magpie: she knew everything that happened in the principality,—marriages, deaths, lawsuits, &c. The countess du Nord made her the channel of a great deal of her charity. She was an excellent woman, in spite of her weaknesses and follies, and often asked for assistance for the poor, and was devotedly attached to her masters.

We passed a month in the most delightful manner, constantly thinking of some new amusement,—walking, riding, music, and proverbs, which was then a fashionable amusement at Paris. The grand-duchess was again Princess Dorothea, with the additional happiness of having a beloved and loving husband. The grand-duke possessed every quality calculated to win and retain affection; his only fault was too great a susceptibility, proceeding from the excellence of his heart. This, however, did not prevent his forming lasting attachments, and he was always sincere and frank in the expression of his regard. He would sometimes be quite enthusiastic about something, for which he would soon after feel quite indifferent, which is an usual failing in persons of a very lively temperament. But in everything connected with his wife he was serious and affectionate; he absolutely adored her. I never saw a happier marriage.

13*th August.*—Charles, reigning duke of Wurtemberg, came as usual without any announcement to visit his august niece and nephew at Etupes. Preparations had been made for a grand theatrical performance that very evening, which the countess du Nord announced herself to her uncle. He laughed a great deal at us, but he said that it was only to encourage us, and that he would be happy to engage us to repeat our performance at the theatre at Stuttgard when we would vist him. The grand-duchess said that she was not rich enough to buy the necessary dresses; and in such jesting and joyous conversation did the evening pass away.

Duke Charles remained but thirty-six hours. He returned to Stuttgard, where we were soon after to join him.

18*th August.*—I had the honour of accompanying the count and countess du Nord in their visit to the city of Montbéliard. They were received by the magistrates in great state in the town-hall, which had been decorated for the occasion, and where a delicious collation was prepared in their honour. The count du Nord particularly admired the fruit, having never seen any so fine in Russia; what they have being brought at great expense from France, and never so good as what is left at home.

After the collation we had a ball; we were very gay, and everybody danced. The countess du Nord renewed her acquaintance with the city ladies, their children, and all whom she had known when a girl, and by whom she was universally beloved. The town-hall and all the public buildings were illuminated in honour of the city's guests; and nothing could exceed the joy and delight of these good people in seeing one of their daughters married to so high and rich a prince.

The next day their imperial highnesses sent fifty louis to the *chambre de charité*, and a hundred to the hospital.

28th August.—A letter was received from St. Petersburg which contained a detailed account of the inauguration of the statue of Peter the Great, on the 18th of August. It was an equestrian statue, sculptured by the chisel of M. Falconet. It is erected on the Grand Place, between the senate-house and the bridge of the Neva, and placed on an immense rock of granite brought from Siberia. Peter seems to be trying to reach the top, an allegorical allusion to his life which every one can understand; and which is made, if possible, more plain by a serpent lying at his horse's feet. The empress Catherine II. presided at this fête, sitting on the balcony of the senate-house.

While this letter was being read, the count du Nord made me a private signal by putting his finger on his lips; and though he affected to smile, I perceived that he was almost as pale as death.

2nd September.—The count and countess du Nord set out for a short tour in Switzerland, accompanied by the prince and princess of Holstein, and a very small suite. The princess of Holstein generally resided at Eyincourt, a small village near Etupes. This parting was very painful to me, particularly as it was the herald of the lifelong separation from one so well and so deservedly beloved. The princess de Montbéliard and I wept together all the evening. She could not reconcile herself to again part with her beloved daughter, and had the most gloomy presentiments about her future destiny, which, thank heaven, were never realised.

8th September.—This was a day of real family rejoicing at Etupes; all the family were assembled to erect in a chosen part of the garden a monument in honour of the visit of the grand-duke. It was a very simple kind of altar; but it was on this day entirely concealed by the garlands of roses and daisies with which we ornamented it. The princess de Montbéliard was very much annoyed by finding some scabions among the decorations, and ordered them to be removed. The Chevalier Florian composed the following verses, which were engraved on the front of the altar :—

Full of deep and sweet emotion,
  Before this simple sylvan shrine
Stands a mother, whose devotion
  Breathes a joy almost divine.

Now, surrounded by her treasures,
  Would she send her thanks above,
Grateful for the many pleasures
  Which have paid a mother's love.

Stranger, rest thee near this shade ;
  If a parent's heart be thine,
Thou canst picture her's who made
  All the wreaths upon this shrine.

10*th September*.—I left Etupes to spend some days at Schweighausen, and was delighted to find myself again in the home of my childhood, and with my father, whose advanced age made my presence more necessary to him. His health was perfectly good, for he enjoyed a green old age. He felt great pleasure in the society of his little granddaughter. My days passed very tranquilly at Schweighausen, in reading and needlework ; and only interrupted by the preparations we were making to receive the prince and princess de Montbéliard, who were to visit us on their way to Strasburg, to rejoin the grand-duchess.

My father invited them to dinner, which was no small trouble to a man of his age, accustomed to lead a life of retirement; but he was not the less pleased to receive those excellent princes in his house, who for so many years had been so extremely kind to us.

After dinner, I set out with their royal highnesses for Schelstadt, where we were to pass the night, and where we met M. de Wurmser, who is lieutenant-colonel of the Anhalt regiment, and Count Wartensleben, lieutenant-colonel also of the same regiment, and whose wife was lady-in-waiting to the duchess of Wurtemberg.

14*th September.*—We dined at Strasburg; and the very same day the count and countess du Nord, &c. &c., arrived there on their return from Switzerland. The travellers were all as gay and communicative as possible. We had a most delightful supper, during which we were greatly amused by M. de la Fermière's account of his adventures amongst the mountains, where he was often in danger of falling down a precipice, not being exactly as agile as a gazelle. A thousand jests were made at his expense, all of which he took in very good part.

15*th September.*—New guests arrived this day; the duke and duchess of Deux Ponts, and Prince Max, the duke's brother, who was married to a princess of Hesse-Darmstadt.* They were both very young. The reigning Duke Charles was married to Princess Amelia of Saxe; but their union was not a very happy one. This gave the countess du Nord great pain; she had been herself so happy in her marriage, that she felt the deepest pity for any one less fortunate. The duke had a mistress, who exercised the most absolute control over him, and he became day after day more estranged from his wife. It was very melancholy. The duchess was young and beautiful, and very sensitive, and suffered deeply from her husband's neglect. It was evident to everybody that she would not be able to bear up much longer against the grief that oppressed her; and she did, in fact, die some time after, without having experienced any alleviation of her misery, but quite the contrary.

The duke had two sisters; the Princess Augusta, married to the elector of Saxe, and the Princess Mary, married to the palatin of Birkenfeld; he was nephew to the duke of Deux Ponts, who had been unfortunately killed in 1775 by the over-turning of his carriage: he had one son, aged six years. His poor wife excited universal commiseration. I remember that she wore on her arm a beautiful bracelet, fastened with a portrait of the duke; it was a bridal gift. The countess du Nord admired the bracelet very much; but she did not think the portrait like, and said to the duchess:

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* Prince Max succeeded to the duchy of Deux Ponts in 1795, to the electoral palatinate in 1799, and was made king of Bavaria in 1805. He had by his wife, a princess of Baden, two sons, and a daughter married to Prince Eugène Napoléon Beauharnais, since become duke of Leuchtenberg.—*Editor's Note.*

"I do not think the portrait very like the duke, madame."

"It was like him *then*," said she, "but he is very much changed since."

As she finished these words, she raised her eyes to heaven, and uttered a sigh so sad and mournful, that we all felt deeply moved.

The countess du Nord visited the Princess Christina of Saxe, who, though canoness of the chapter of Remiremont, resides almost always at Strasburg. She was as good as she was ugly. She was sister to that poor duchess of Deux Ponts, but there was no personal resemblance between them. The Elector Frederick Augustus, married to the Princess Marie of Bavaria, was her brother.

The count du Nord admired the cathedral of Strasburg exceedingly; the steeple, like an arrow of delicate lace-work wrought in stone, and its curious clock, seemed marvellous to him. The piece of architecture—too frail for the rough encounter of the populace—is guarded at its base with a railing five feet high. At the foot of the steeple is a large celestial globe, supported by a pelican, round which the emblems of the sun and earth make a circuit every twenty-four hours. Opposite to this are three large wheels; one of which, ten feet high, is called the Almanack wheel, because it tells the hour and the days of the week; it makes a complete revolution on its axis in a year: another, which announces festivals, requires a hundred years to perform a revolution. Beside these wheels are two figures: Apollo, the god of day, pointing with an arrow to the hour, and the name of the festival; and Diana, emblem of night, showing the opposite hours. Suspended near are two large pictures, representing the eclipses of the sun and moon.

Above the wheels is a sky, on which each day of the week is represented in a small chariot, and which comes into the most prominent part at its appointed time.

Farther on are three sun-dials, beside the first of which stand two angels,—one on the right holding a sceptre, with which he strikes the dial every hour, and the other, placed on the left, turns an hour-glass after the hour has been struck. The second sun-dial shows the movements of the planets; and above the third are two bells, on which the representatives of the four ages strike the quarters.

Beneath are placed Life and Death, and beside the clock an arch, on which is perched the most perfect imitation of a cock, who at his appointed time claps his wings, stretches out his neck, and crows twice, in a manner worthy of chanticleer himself. On the front of the arch is painted a likeness of the great Copernicus, whose advice materially assisted in the construction of this clock, which was made in 1550 by Lubrecht.*

We next visited the arsenal, and the tomb of Marshal Saxe, in the Protestant temple of St. Thomas. On the 20th August 1777, the body of the marshal was brought here ; on which occasion a young minister, M. Blessig, pronounced a very fine discourse, which I remember finished with these words :

"Thou reposest, Maurice, but thy sons will protect us ; they are thy living honours."

This was a compliment to the regiment of Schomberg dragoons, formerly the Hulan regiment of Marshal Saxe. This warrior, conqueror of Fontenoy and Lanfeld, was the natural son of the elector of Saxe, king of Poland, and the countess of Königsmarck, and consequently grand-uncle of the present elector of Saxe, and of the duchess of Deux Ponts.

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* This clock got out of order, but was cleaned and repaired some years since by M. Schwilgué.—*Editor's Note.*

There are two different engravings of this tomb, which arose from the following cause:—In the original was sculptured a Cupid putting out his torch; but this idea being thought very unsuitable to a place of worship, Pigale, the artist, put a helmet on the head of the god of love, and transformed him into Mars; but in 1777 the helmet was taken off again, and thus we have two different representations of the same thing.

Speaking of Schomberg reminds me of a duel that took place this same year between M. de Schomberg and Baron Lefort, of Geneva, lieutenant-colonel of his regiment, and brother-in-law of one cousin M. de Falkenheim, a general who commanded in Corsica. The combatants knelt, each holding the end of a handkerchief, and fired their pistols at the same moment. M. de Schomberg was wounded severely, but M. Lefort only lost a lock of his hair. M. de Schomberg had been the aggressor, and had the generosity to acknowledge it.

This same year, 1782, Frederick Lefort, staff-major of M. de Falkenheim, brought the king intelligence of the surrender of Minorca and of General Murray. On this occasion M. de Crillon, lieutenant-general in the Spanish service, was appointed captain-general by his Catholic majesty.

I will have in another place to speak of this M. de Crillon, and that is the reason that I mention this circumstance.

In the evening we went to the theatre, where was performed a piece that was then very fashionable, called 'La Feé Urgèle.' Verses were sung in honour of the count and countess du Nord, which caused M. de la Fermière to say,—

"Although I do not see the white cockade, I feel that we are still in France."

Here are the verses:—

Noble princes, 'tis in vain
  You would keep the truth afar,
For your tell-tale virtues plain
  Tell us who you are.

Vainly is Apollo's ray
Hid by clouds on wintry day;
Though less pure heaven's azure seems,
We feel the influence of his beams.

Every hero-name delights us,
Each good king to praise invites us;
Love for Louis our heart fills,
Us thy name with rapture thrills,
And amidst our prayers for him
We your name will loudly hymn.

Noble princes, 'tis in vain
  You would keep the truth afar,
For your tell-tale virtues plain
  Tell us who you are.

Here thy noble grandsire came,
And, though dearly loved by fame,

Still less great his lot than your ;
O'er thy path the Graces pour
All their winning fancies bland ;
Whilst Minerva, calm and grand,
In the cortége takes her place,
Crowning all with solemn grace,
She his triumph too did share,
But the Graces were not there.

Thus you triumph as you go,
All to you submission show ;
Conquered by your worth and graces,
Still you reign in all these places,
And where'er your footsteps bend,
Still your empire you extend.

Noble princes, 'tis in vain
  You would keep the truth afar,
For your tell-tale virtues plain
  Tell us who you are.

Far from this abode you'll roam,
Called by love and duty home ;
Midst the battle's angry breath
You shall win the victor's wreath.
But a fairer wreath is wove
By the hand of her you love.
Happy prince, whose fair renown
Mingles Mars' with Cupid's crown.

These were composed by Sieur Belleval, a royal comedian, but they are not a whit the better for that. I have kept my promise of transcribing all these poetic effusions, and, thank heaven, we are at last come to the end of them.

As we left the theatre, we saw the steeple of the cathedral, illuminated from the base even to the very summit, and the grand-duke, who had never seen anything of the kind, was in the greatest admiration; indeed nothing could be more brilliant or effective, and I have heard that it could not be exceeded even at St. Peter's.

16*th September.*—We went to Polygone to see a review of the troops. Their imperial highnesses were accompanied by the marquis de la Salle, under-governor of Strasburg; by the marquis de Paulney, general; by M. de Pescherg, lieutenant of the king, at the *gouvernement-général;* by M. de Lort, king's lieutenant at Strasburg; M. Paumont, decorated with a red ribbon, colonel of the 'queen's cavalry;' by the marquis de Foulougeon, colonel of the 'dauphin cavalry;' the count of Ponterès, colonel of the 'royal Corsicans;' Baron Chazelle, lieutenant-colonel; and M. de Marzy, commander of the artillery school.

There was also at Polygone the Duchess Christina of Saxe, and all the principal ladies of Strasburg. Ladies are very fond of reviews, and look to great advantage there. From Polygone we went to Bischoffsheim, where we dined, and then again set out for Carlsruhe, a charming residence of the margrave of Baden, where we were to pass the night.

In passing through Rastadt, we were all surprised to see the margrave and margravine, who came to invite their imperial highnesses to a most exquisite collation. The country all round was delightful, and we felt most desirous of seeing more of it. At Carlsruhe we found the prince and princess of Hesse-Darmstadt, the duke and duchess of Deux Ponts, and an immense crowd of other guests.

Here we were obliged to make a fresh toilet. The countess du Nord was exquisitely dressed, and wore a most charming head-dress that had been sent her from Paris by Leonard, the queen's hairdresser. We had a concert at eleven in the evening, at which the celebrated Madame Todi sung. Some person was asked whether he would prefer this singer or another that performed at this theatre.

"Ah!" said he, "c'est bien Todi" (bientôt dit).

Madame Todi had a beautiful face, with an expression of seriousness, though endowed with a very lively sensibility. Her acting in lyric tragedy was excellent and affecting. She was a Portuguese, and had made her first appearance on the English stage. She intended to remain some time in Germany, then return to Paris, from whence she was to go to Russia. We had supper at two, and it was three in the morning when we got to bed, overpowered by these fatiguing pleasures.

17*th September.*—We all left Carlsruhe for Ensberg, a small city on the frontiers of the duchy of Wurtemberg, and were to dine there in a pretty retreat erected in honour of the grand-duchess by her uncle. There was also a triumphal arch, decorated with every imaginable kind of emblem; troops of young maidens received the princess, and presented her with lovely bouquets, and she made them some very pretty compliments in return. The dinner was delightful, to which the brilliant conversation of the duke of Wurtemberg added not a little.

In the evening we returned to Stuttgard, amidst the pealing of cannon and the acclamations of the people. The rejoicings and illuminations were universal. So beloved is the house of Wurtemberg by its subjects, that the people look upon their princes more as fathers than as sovereigns, and warmly sympathise in every addition to their dignity or happiness. The grand-duke was almost borne in triumph; and during the entire night the ducal palace was surrounded by a joyous crowd, shouting with delight at the happiness of their rulers.

When the illustrious travellers left the palace to go to the theatre, they were accompanied by the crowd cheering and huzzaing, which was enthusiastically echoed as they entered the house by those within the walls.

We had an Italian opera, called the 'Thessalian

Festival.' The theatre at Stuttgard is very large, and beautifully ornamented. All the actors and members of the orchestra are educated in an academy founded by the duke, and are thoroughly trained for the profession of their choice.

The first view of the interior of the theatre was splendid, filled with ladies radiant with beauty and diamonds. All the nobility of the duchy, and the duke and duchess of Deux Ponts, the princes of Darmstadt and Hesse, had come to Stuttgard for the occasion. After the opera we had a large party at supper.

18*th September.*—After a state dinner, where we were almost stifled, and an opera where M. de la Fermière fell asleep, we had a delightful supper in private, to which only the foreign princes and princesses were invited. The duke said to his niece, in the most insinuating and courteous manner, that he would feel very grateful if she would dine with him the next day in a place that he would take her to, and she, suspecting the truth, consented with a smile.

"Be prepared then," said he, "to go into the country; but I will take care that you shall not find it too wearisome. I will introduce you to a new acquaintance, for whom I ask your kindest consideration."

I have already told how the duke had been very dissipated in his youth, and that after having wooed a hundred ladies he had become constant to the superior attractions of one, a lady of high birth, young and beautiful, gifted with every grace of body and mind. She was a true friend to the duke, who, under her influence, became a wise and enlightened prince, devoted to the interests of his subjects, and using for their advancement the noble faculties with which he had been endowed by nature.

The duchess, his wife, died in 1780; and he was, at the time which I write, thinking of forming a new alliance with the countess of Hohenheim (this was the title he had bestowed upon his friend, from a chateau she owned near Stuttgard), and was only prevented by political reasons, which, however, were happily arranged, and the marriage took place in 1780 with universal approbation. Many persons asserted that they were already privately married. It would not become me to express any opinion of the false and delicate position of the countess of Hohenheim with respect to persons acquainted with the state of affairs. I may, however, say that the court often visited her, and every person seemed by their respectful demeanour to anticipate the event that has since sanctified her supposed connexion with the duke. The countess du Nord felt as little inclined as anybody else to deny her position, and only gratified her own wishes in accepting the invitation of her uncle. The countess of Hohenheim was noble and simple in her manners; and the rare qualities of her heart, the extent of her information, and the excellence of her understanding, made her distinguished even amongst the women of Germany, who yield to none in point of education. She loved and protected the arts, and would willingly have transformed Stuttgard into a modern Athens. She was sincerely and disinterestedly attached to the duke, who was twenty years older than she. He was fifty-eight, when they were married four years after this.

20th September.—We went to dine at Hohenheim. Our hostess received us with the most perfect tact and politeness; she knew perfectly well how to hold her own position, and not interfere with that of others, and show at the same time that she was grateful for the honour done her. It was a very wet day, raining from morning until night, which unfortunately prevented our seeing all the beauties of this charming residence, which the duke himself had arranged, and was anxious that his niece should admire. She perceived his disappointment, and said at parting—

"We will return to-morrow, uncle."

"My dear niece," said he, "you are as good as you are beautiful, and the qualities of your heart are equal to those of your mind."

21*st September.*—We went again to Hohenheim, and the weather being very fine we were able to walk in the park. A place they called a 'Village Anglais' reminded me of one at Trianon, which is larger certainly, but not handsomer or more ornamented. The grand-duchess asked the countess to accompany her in her walk, and their conversation was such as it ought to be between two such women,—agreeable, without pedantry or false modesty.

We returned to Stuttgard for a large ball, where the grand-duchess danced a great deal, and was very much admired. She came to me where I sat conversing in a corner, and forced me to dance, very much against my will, for I never liked dancing.

22*nd September.*—After visiting the Academy and dining in state we set out for Louisburg, a residence of the duke, where there is a beautiful theatre. Preparations had been made for a masked ball, and an immense number of guests had been invited. The masquerade dresses were very well chosen. M. de la Fermière was disguised as a windmill, and made a most ludicrous appearance: he said a thousand most amusing and malicious things to every body, except the grand-duchess, to whom he was most complimentary, though affecting not to recognize her.

23rd September.—We visited the military school and the orphan hospital, which the duke had instituted for poor children of soldiers. We next went to see the manufactories of porcelain, where the duke made presents to every person, and presented his illustrious mother with an inimitable mantelpiece, ornamented with the most beautiful medallions and camieux.

We went to pass the night at 'The Solitude,' a chateau three leagues from Louisburg, built by the duke during the wilder years of his youth. The house is large and regular, and commands a most splendid view. It was illuminated with so much brilliancy that one need make but a slight effort of imagination to suppose it the palace of the sun. We had an Italian opera, and afterwards a supper in the 'Salle des Lauriers,' where the statues, vases, brilliant lights, &c., had a most dazzling effect.

24th September.—We dined at 'The Solitude,' and drove through the gardens and visited the stables, which are built of stone, and can accommodate three hundred horses: they are almost as celebrated as those of Chantilly. In the centre is a rotunda, ornamented with four fountains: in this building parties have been often given. The duke said to his niece, as he was showing her all these things—

" I regret that I should have been so much led away when I was young. I did not think sufficiently of the happiness of my people, who require a constant care ; however, I have given up building palaces, and only think of making hospitals."

The count du Nord, who heard this, said—

" The erection of palaces is not so unwise as you would seem to say. The grandeur of princes is the greatness of the people, and all the money that you have spent here has only given employment to your subjects and added to their comforts."

They were both right.

We returned to Stuttgard, and went to the theatre, where they played ' L'Irwisch.'

25th September.—We dined at noon, and then went to a kind of chateau, surrounded by water, called ' Buren See,' where the duke had made preparations for a hunt. We saw a thousand stags and hinds walking in troops, and some swimming across the lake. It was a strange sight. The hunters were delighted, but the spectators were moved by the appearance of the doomed game, which were slaughtered without mercy. Several cars loaded with their bodies were brought away, and made presents of by the duke.

I was very sad amid all this gaiety, for in a few days I was to part from my dear princess, never perhaps to see her again. Her mother spoke only to me, for our feelings were the same: we could talk of nothing but the coming separation, and made ourselves as miserable as possible.

The duke and the countess de Hohenheim accompanied the grand-duchess in her visit to the academy for the education of boys, in which the duke feels great interest. She then went to the Russian church, where a priest of that religion belonging to the suite of the grand-duke and duchess officiated. Then we had a state dinner, and after a grand Italian opera, 'Didon Abandonnée.'

26*th September*.—We went to the town-house of the countess of Hohenheim: it was a gem; its elegance and richness were incomparable. In the evening we had a concert, in a saloon of the palace painted in fresco and called the 'Temple of Apollo.' In the centre was a fountain, of which the waters rose to the ceiling.

The princes and princesses supped in private. After supper we had a most cruel and sorrowful scene. The countess du Nord, who was to leave us next day, was in an agony of despair, and wept all the evening. But the princess de Montbéliard was more to be pitied, for, although her heart was bursting with grief, she could not shed a tear. We feared that she would be stifled. After getting the poor mother to bed, I went to the room of the grand-duchess, and remained with her until two in the morning. What she told me of herself, her husband, and of the empress, I cannot repeat, which is a great pity, as it would add greatly to the interest of these memoirs; but I gave my word that I would not tell. All night I could do nothing but weep; and the next day, 27th September, was one of the saddest of my life.

I never will forget the day of that mournful parting. I accompanied the grand-duchess even to her carriage, where they were obliged to tear us asunder.

"Do not leave my mother, dear Lane," said she, sobbing. "Oh, my mother, my mother!"

The count du Nord ordered the door of the carriage to be closed, whilst he bid me adieu with mingled sorrow and kindness.

"We will see you again, Madame d'Oberkirch; you will come to see us in the midst of our ice."

"Adieu, dear Lane," said the princess.

The carriage drove off! I spent the remainder of the day shut up with the desolate father and mother, and we all gave free vent to our tears. The grand-duchess sent four couriers with letters for her parents and for me, and their tenderness and affection only renewed our grief. She had borne away with her all our gaiety. The reigning duke showed a real interest for his sister-in-law and niece.

"Be consoled," said he; "she is going to the greatest throne in the world."

But alas! this throne removed her far from us.

28*th September.*—A fresh sorrow for me: I had to part with the duke and duchess of Montbéliard, who set out for home. I remained two days longer at Stuttgard to visit my old friends, and especially Mdlle. Cramm, who had taken such care of me the year before, when I had the small-pox. This amiable young lady, so lovely and so good, and who so well deserved to be happy, has been since married to M. de Mandelslok.*

29*th September.*—My father and I set out for Strasburg, where we were to spend the winter.

Thus ended my travels, so agreeable and charming, and so flattering to me and my family. During four months and a half I was in the intimate society of the highest and most distinguished persons, who all honoured me with their friendship. All that time I scarcely ever left my dear princess, my first and best friend. It was a brilliant dream, that God with all his goodness will never grant me again.

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* Father of the count of Mandelsloh, ambassador from Wurtemberg to the courts of London, Berlin, Vienna, and St. Petersburg, and of his brother, who was married to a Degenfeld.—*Editor's Note.*

CHAPTER VII.

Bankruptcy of Prince Rohan de Guéménée—Noble conduct of the princess—The duchess de Polignac is made governess to the royal children—Under-governesses—The countess and Mdlle. de Soucy—Madame de Créqui—M. de la Harpe—Betrothment of Princess Elizabeth and the Archduke Francis of Austria—Birth of a princess—Catherine II.—Two letters from the grand-duchess of Russia—The court—An evening at Etupes—Lottery—Ladies of honour—Marchioness de Vernouillet—Mdlle. de Domsdorf—Prince-abbot of Rathsamhausen—M. Frouchin—Anecdote of Voltaire—MM. de Wargemont—Captain Loto—Councillor Rossel—Madame de Schack—Madame de Danitz—The lesser passions of society.

At Strasburg, as well at at Paris, nothing was talked of but the bankruptcy of the prince de Guéménée: it was a most unfortunate affair. How, it was said, was it possible that a Rohan would allow himself to get into such a dilemma? The people were outrageous, because a great number of his creditors were porters, small shopkeepers, and servants, who had given their savings in charge to the prince. He had received everything that was offered him, and had borrowed immense sums, all of which were spent. Many servants of the cardinal Rohan had lent money to the prince, and would have been completely ruined but for the noble generosity of the cardinal, who immediately repaid them what they had lent to a prince of his family.

All, or almost all, was paid, with the exception of the usury. The Rohans all united to make up the necessary sum. The conduct of the princess de Guéménée was almost sublime. She immediately gave up her diamonds and her entire fortune to the creditors, and the princess de Marsan (a Rohan-Soubise) retired to a convent, and gave her entire fortune to save the honour of the Rohans.

The princess de Guéménée resigned her office of governess to the royal children, which, being one of the high offices of the crown, could not be taken from her without her own consent. The queen was deeply moved by her resignation. She gave the office to Madame de Polignac, who could not refuse to accept it.

"I gave them first in charge to virtue," said the queen, "and I cannot do better now than put them under the guidance of friendship."

The queen herself took charge of the princess royal, assisted by Madame Adelaide and two under-governesses. She was requested to give the office of governess to the princess of Chinay, or to the duchess of Mailly, but her majesty was determined not to have any person but Madame de Polignac.

The princess de Guéménée, though a most excellent person, was considered inferior to the office, to which her birth alone could give her any title. She had the reputation of being obstinate, though without any decision of character, which is the worst kind of obstinacy. She was passionate, and unequal in her humour. It was said that she was aware of the embarrassment of her husband's affairs, and that she sought distraction from more serious thought in the amusements of society, which she was very capable of enjoying. She was very much blamed; but it is a maxim of the world always to blame the unfortunate, as it saves one the trouble of pitying them.

However, it must be admitted that if she bore nobly the misfortunes of her husband, she also contributed to them. The unheard-of prodigalities of the prince, the splendour of his house, the magnificence of his entertainments, and the expenditure of his wife, brought on this bankruptcy. His debts amounted to thirty-five millions. The princess de Guéménée was of the house of March, and sister to the duke de Bouillon.

The under-governesses were—

Baroness Mackan, appointed in 1771.

Countess de Soucy, appointed in 1775.

Marchioness de Soucy, appointed in 1781.

Mdlle. de Soucy was married to the count de Créqui, *maréchal de logis* to the camp and armies of the king. It was on her account that the queen supported her husband against the marchioness de Créqui, who would not acknowledge him as a relation of her son's. This marchioness has great authority in the fashionable world, from her rank, her wit, and character. She is not considered good —she is severe, and often cruel in her remarks; she is proud and capricious, approving to-day what she condemned yesterday. Her drawing-room is an Areopagus, where bitter sarcasms are uttered against her enemies, that cut their souls like sharpened steel. She has persecuted these poor Créquis, whom she will not receive as relations.

Whilst I was at Strasburg, M. de la Harpe paid a visit to the court at Montbéliard, which, thank heaven, I was spared. He wearied them even more than he had wearied me, and for a longer time. The count of Artois was just returned from Spain, and was universally praised and admired. M. de la Harpe *invented* all the travels of the prince, a word of which he did not know. He also took it into his head to make a funeral oration for baron de Wangen, prince-bishop of Basle, and for M. d'Andlau, grand provost of the chapter of Murbach, who had died about a month before. No person went to hear him, and he left the place in anger. This was not an unusual event. I do not know how it was that I could never endure that bilious and envious man, who appeared to me like a serpent with two heads, with one of which he bit, and poured forth venom from the other.

About the same time the Princess Elizabeth was betrothed to the Archduke Francis of Austria. She was immediately taken to Vienna, where she abjured the Protestant religion, but was not married to the grand-duke until 1788.*

A short time after the Princess Augusta of Brunswick, wife of Frederick William, prince of Wurtemberg, gave birth to a daughter. The young princess was brought up at Montbéliard.†

We often heard from the grand-duchess of Russia. Neither she nor the grand-duke enjoyed much happiness, except in their affection for each other, for they were a model of conjugal love and fidelity. The empress was suspicious and jealous of her authority, and they were obliged to act with the greatest circumspection, to avoid giving her offence. They were not allowed to take any part in public affairs, only receiving their guests at St. Petersburg, or in the country, with the simple refinement and good taste, which the grand-duchess had learned at the court of Montbéliard.

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* This princess died in her confinement in 1790. Her husband was afterwards Francis II., emperor of Austria.

† This princess married Jerome Bonaparte, king of Westphalia.—*Editor's Note.*

Here are two letters I received from her imperial highness.

"My dear Lane, "St. Petersburg, $\frac{\text{22 March,}}{\text{2 April,}}$ 1783.

"T—— has arrived, and given me your letters and your beautiful knots. I must tell you, my dear Lane, that yours are the best made, and their number shows me how often you have been thinking of me. Those of the —— of —— are also very pretty, but, *entre nous*, the good Benemen's are villanous, and those of Gournay will afford a few to be selected from them. I beg of you, dear Lane, to continue this work, and at the same time to thank all the contributors, beginning with our dear Benemen. I have received a fresh supply of silks—what I had, not being sufficient, and if you are not tired of this work, I will send them to you. This letter will find you at Strasburg, and far from mamma, which grieves me to think of, for your tender care and affection can alone supply the place of her children. I beseech you, by all that is dear to you, to go to her soon again; and if it be necessary to prostrate myself at the feet of your lord and master, to obtain his consent, I do so most willingly. What a letter from your friend! but although its subject may not be the most elevated, it will at least prove my love for you, and that is all I care for. Adieu, my dearest angel, and believe me ever your faithful friend.

(Signed) "MARY."

The names quoted in this letter, are not of any interest.

"My dear Lane, "St. Petersburg, $\frac{12}{23}$ April 1783.

"That wicked fever has made me very uneasy, but now that you are recovered, I must complain of your not writing me a single line. That great Fritz, and even Beckendorf, have been written to, whilst I have been *abgeschnitzt** with a cold compliment. Besides this, I have another complaint against you: mamma does not love me any longer: she writes me such cold letters, without any of her usual affection, and I blame you for this, for heaven knows that it is not my fault. All this makes me unhappy and out of humour; but still I love you, and tell you so with pleasure. Adieu, you wicked woman! I will ever be your affectionate friend.

(Signed) "MARY."

I arrived at Montbéliard just as the baroness de Mauclere gave birth to a son, who was called Paul Theodore Eugene, and who had at least as many godfathers and godmothers as my daughter. His parents were enchanted. The court of Montbéliard was as usual passing the summer at Etupes, and the princess received me, as she always did, like one of her own children. I could not give a proper description of the peaceful and calm serenity that was enjoyed in this retired corner of the world. Their own family, some neighbours, and occasional visitors from a distance, formed a most delightful society for the prince and princess. If they were not all equally intellectual and *spirituelle*, they were at least all sincerely attached to their hosts. What is called *good society*, in the strictest acceptation of the term, is not very easily met with anywhere, but variety of characters and of tastes will always be entertaining.

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* Cut off.—*Editor's Note.*

The evening of the day after my arrival, we played the then fashionable game of loto, in the drawing-room, all decorated with flowers in remembrance of the grand-duchess, who was so fond of them. Our company consisted of the family of the prince, Madame de Baumitz, and Madame de Schack, ladies of honour, and Mdlle. de Pomsdorff, maid of honour to her royal highness; Baron and Baroness Boreck, grand master and mistress, whom I described before; baron de Mauclere, governor of the young prince, and his wife, *née* Baroness Lefort; baron de Schwazer, bishop *in partibus*, high almoner to the duke; the count of Baleuze; the marquis of Vernouillet, natural son of Louis XV., and very like his father; Captain Parrot, formerly in the service of the English East India Company; Councillor Jean, mayor of Montbéliard; M. Rossel, councillor of Geneva; M. Duvernay, a neighbour at Exincourt; the prince-abbot of the noble and united chapters of Murbach and of Luze; Baron Wurmser, grand hunstman; Barons Francis and Frederick Wurmser, both brigadiers of infantry; the commander de Waldner, my uncle; Baron Waldner, my father; count de Wartensleben, lieutenant-colonel in Anhalt, and his wife *née* de Linas. As we were to be gayer than usual, our circle was larger than on other days. The princes and princesses had made a lottery for the poor; a loto the most *enticing*, said Mdlle. Pomsdorff, a pretty and witty young lady, whose business it was to arrange the cards.

"The lotos promise a great deal, gentlemen, choose your numbers, and you may be certain that you will have no cause for regret."

The first twenty numbers drawn were the most fortunate; there was great excitement in this generally tranquil circle,—looking for cards, telling the dreams of the night before, and giving explanations of them. It would have been amusement enough in itself to watch the expression of the different faces,—some so gay, others so serious. The prince de Montbéliard took no part in the loto, but was playing chess in a corner with the prince-abbot of Murbach, who took very little interest in anything passing in this terrestrial sphere. The bishop of Schwarzer stood near to advise him on the game. Such of the younger princes and princesses as were at Etupes were grouped around their mother, indulging in that youthful gaiety that no after cares can ever make one entirely forget.

Amongst our visitors were M. and Madame de Tronchin, from Geneva. M. de Tronchin-Calandrin was councillor of state of the Genevese republic, and a great enemy of Jean Jacques Rousseau. He was related to the celebrated Dr. Tronchin, physician to the duke of Orleans, who had discovered inoculation. It was he who had published the 'Lettres écrites de la Campagne,' in reply to Rousseau's 'Lettres écrites de la Montagne.'

This gentleman was sitting next to Madame de Wartensleben, and told her an anecdote of Voltaire that I will relate in my turn, as it is very characteristic of this celebrated man. 'Les Lettres de la Montagne' had been sent to him to Ferney, and he became outrageous at an attack against himself in one of them. He said Rousseau was a fool, a scamp, a wretch, and he would most certainly horsewhip him.

"You will soon have an opportunity," said some person present, " for he intends to pay you a visit at Ferney."

" Let him come," said Voltaire.

" And what will you do when he comes?"

" What will I do? I will give him my best room, a good dinner, and ask him to stay as long as he will find the place agreeable."

" That was Voltaire exactly; he was more thoughtless than wicked," said the viscount de Wargemont, who was listening.

Viscount de Wargemont, captain of the 'Royal Etranger,' stationed at Belfort, had just arrived at Etupes, with an introduction to the prince: he belongs to a Norman family. His elder brother, the marquis de Wargemont, had been colonel of the volunteer regiment of Soubise, and was married to Mdlle. le Tabutor d'Orval. Their sister was married in Picardy to M. de Gauchechart de Quirière. Her brother described this lady in the most enthusiastic manner.

" Leave Rousseau and Voltaire in peace, M. de Tronchin," said the princess; " the important moment is come; who will draw the numbers?"

" Mary, to be sure," said the baroness de Boreck.

" Baroness," said M. de Vernouillet, " let it rather be 'Captain Loto;' it would exactly suit him."

This was the name M. de Vernouillet gave Captain Parrot.

The marquis de Vernouillet was very gay, and what the world generally calls an amiable man; but he was not witty, but had adopted that detestable habit of punning, though his puns were not always good.

"Let it be the captain, then; but let us be attentive."

"Ladies!"

All ranged themselves round the large table, with cards, markers, and all the necessary accessories of loto dauphin. M. and Madame de Boreck sat together, that they might counsel each other.

"My love," said the baron, "be attentive, and do not forget the ambo" (double numbers).

"Ambo" (both), cried M. de Vernouillet, "the baron is right, madame."

"As for me," said councillor Rossel, "I will, of course, lose, as usual."

M. Rossel was a first-rate Greek scholar, an excellent mathematician, and a severe critic, but a very bad card-player. He was rather absent in company, though his manners fitted him for the best society.

"Do not complain until you lose," said Madame de Schack, a very observant and penetrating lady, very well informed, but generally silent.

"Madame de Schack has spoken!" said M. Frederick Wurmser, "that is a prize for the lottery."

Madame Mauclere had fallen into a slumber; she was a little delicate after her illness, and often inclined to sleep.

"I am ready, be attentive," cried Captain Parrot, at the pitch of his voice.

He called out a number.

"It is mine," murmured councillor Jeanmaire, very humbly.

"You have gained that beautiful pincushion, embroidered by the grand-duchess!" said my father; "I congratulate you; it is the best prize in the lottery. I am certain that my daughter would have been very glad to get it."

"Go on," said M. Rossel, in a peevish tone, "I have not that number."

"Already complaining, M. Rossel," said the prince, "and you have still eighteen points!"

The captain named several other numbers. I got a handsome goblet, with the arms of the Teutonic order engraved on it, that had been sent by the countess of Hohenheim. At every number called out that was not on his cards, M. Rossel uttered an exclamation of regret, which always made the duke stop his game and laugh.

"I had every one of these numbers on Sunday,—you know I had, gentlemen," said the unfortunate M. Rossel, "and I cannot find one of them now; I am too unfortunate."

"What numbers were they?" said Madame de Pamitz, who scarcely understood what was going on.

"Madame, they have just called out a one and a four," said the count de Baleuze, a very forgetful man, who never answered correctly.

"Then, monsieur, it must be fourteen."

"Do you think so, madame?"

"Of course I think so; one and four are fourteen. Do you wish to annoy me?"

Everybody laughed. Madame de Pamitz was continually being *annoyed.* We were very much amused by her anger, and the duke said to her,

"I beg your pardon, madame, but one and four are five."

She could not dare to say anything to the duke, but turning to M. de Vernouillet, said,

"It is well for you that it was not you."

"For my dauphin," said he, continuing his game, "it is a hundred."

These trivialities were not unbecoming to a marquis, and contrasted very well with the elegance of his deportment. He said everything that occurred to him, which the princess called his *royal license.*

"My angel," whispered Madame de Boreck to her husband, "you have forgotten a number; it is not an ambe (a double), but a terne" (a triple).

This was accompanied by a coquettish smile, worthy of her youngest days.

The last prize was at length drawn. The play had been pursued with all the avidity of unoccupied people, for whom the smallest thing is an event. M. de Vernouillet, who was afflicted with a rhyming mania, said at the end of the game, as he held up his empty purse,

> Quoi ! déjà plus d'argent, comment le concevoir,
> Vous n'avez plus de ronds, et je n'ai plus d'espoir.

From this may be seen how simple were the customs of this court. It was like a private family, full of good feeling and benevolence. There was never quarrelling or dissension, and hardly ever did even the most innocent criticism enliven their conversation.

They were happy at Etupes, and sought to make everybody happy. What a great deal of good they did! How often have I seen the young princesses deprive themselves of some promised pleasure, that they might be the better able to assist the poor. They were universally beloved and blessed; and the thought of their goodness leaves a tender and touching remembrance in the heart.

CHAPTER VIII.

The duchess de Bourbon at Montbéliard—Particular attention—Her character—Her marriage—The duke's passion for her—Accident to the duke d'Enghien soon after his birth—Coolness—Marchioness de Barbantane—Countess de Hunolstein—The duke of Bourbon at the camp of St. Roche—Solitary walks—Confidence—Mdlle. de Camilhac—Madame de Monaco—Madame de Courtebonne—Mdlle. Michelet, of the Opera—Scene at the "Bal d'opéra"—Becomes public—The king interferes—Duel between the count d'Artois and the duke de Bourbon—The count d'Artois visits the duchess—Their reception at the opera—Indifference of the duke of Chartres—Princess Hénin.

We had a very distinguished and agreeable visitor at Etupes—the duchess of Bourbon. She was travelling, in order to relieve her mind from the deep annoyance she felt at being separated from her husband, and from the unjust accusations of the world. It was in remembrance of the countess du Nord that she visited Etupes; she had liked her very much, but had not been able to know her as much as she wished. To the same cause I was indebted for the particular attention that she paid me, and of which I could not believe myself deserving. The very first day of her arrival, she said to me, with the frankness that was natural to her,

" Madame d'Oberkirch, the grand-duchess is very fortunate in having you for a friend; and, if I dared, I would ask you to allow me the second place in your friendship."

I made a suitable reply.

" It is understood, then, that from this day, you belong to me in France, which will not prevent your belonging to the grand-duchess in Russia. We will divide you like Proserpine, only that I would not wish to be Pluto."

The duchess de Bourbon was daughter of the duke of Orleans (grandson of the regent, and married to madame de Montesson) and of a princess of Bourbon-Conti, who died in 1759. She was, at the time of which I write, thirty-three years of age, having been born in 1750. She was not handsome; but she was agreeable, lively, and vivacious, and of a passionate and generous character. She resembled the family into which she married more than her own, and she herself often said,

" I am all Condé, and have no trace of Orleans."

She was married in 1770; the duke was desperately in love with her. 'L'amoureux de quinze ans,' which was performed at Chantilly in honour of the marriage, was suggested by the passionate admiration of the duke for his wife, and which he told to everybody. It was arranged that, after the ceremony, the bridegroom should travel for some time, and that the bride should retire into a convent until his return. This did not suit the wishes of the young gentleman, who, without any further ceremony, ran off with his wife. She had no objection.

In some time after the duchess gave birth to a son, who received the title of duke of Enghien. When the child was born it was quite black, and had no appearance of life; and it was rolled up in linen, steeped in brandy. By some accident these swathings took fire, and there was most dreadful consternation, as everybody was certain that the infant would be consumed; but he escaped by a miracle.

The love of the duke was too violent to last long; it flared up, and went out as quickly as burning straw. He became attentive to other ladies, which was very disagreeable to the duchess, who did all she could to regain his affection; but, being too violent in her complaints, he only became more estranged. In the end they became mutually indifferent, and were separated in 1780.

The duchess of Bourbon is of a weak and undecided character, never certain of her own wishes, and consequently easily influenced; but that influence is easily shaken. She is good, but reserved, even with those she loves best. She is timid; and, though by no means deficient in intellect, sometimes utterly unable to support a conversation. She often says, that she has seen everything,—learned everything,—loved everything,—but that she is weary of all. This melancholy disposition is not natural, for few women possess more resources in their own minds. She is fond of retirement—in the society of a few friends; she cultivates the arts and sciences, and has no objection to a little epicurism. She paints, plays the harp, and takes great interest in the doctrines of Lavater and Mesmer. She has a desire to know, but has not the patience to learn. She has no decided taste in the qualities she would wish in a friend; sometimes attaching herself to persons of the most opposite tastes, principles, and habits. She never interferes with any person's opinions, nor yields her own.

She has a graceful and original turn of thought, which renders her conversation—when she does converse—very piquant and agreeable. She has a horror of vice; which she proved by refusing to receive, as lady of honour, the countess de Hunolstein, daughter to her governess, Madame de Brabantane, because she knew her to be a person of depraved inclinations. Since the duel (of which I will soon speak), and her separation from her husband, she has adopted some mystical ideas of a very exalted character; and her political opinions are inclined to be democratical—rather strange in a princess of her family. Those who are acquainted with her, can easily understand this, for she is passionate in everything, and easily goes from one extreme to the other,—an unfortunate disposition for such times as these.

The duke of Bourbon set out for Spain with the count of Artois, in the August of 1782, under the assumed name of count de Dammartin. He joined the camp of St. Roch, before Gibraltar, and fought like a Condé: man could do no more. At his return, the king made him field-marshal.

During her residence at Etupes, the duchess did me the honour of asking me to accompany her in solitary walks. We remained sometimes for more than three hours, tête-à-tête, talking of ordinary persons, or things; but our most usual conversation was of the calumnies propagated against the duchess, which gave her greater pain than was generally supposed, and which she was anxious to convince me were quite unfounded. One day she said to me, with an embarrassment that surprised me,—

“My dear baroness, you only know me by the adventures that are invented for me, and you must think me a very strange woman. Do not say that you do not, for I will not believe you."

"But, madame, you place me in a very awkward position."

"I place you in the position of a woman, whom I would wish to know the truth, if she has patience and inclination to learn it. Let me see, which of my three enormities would you wish me to explain? One is not more difficult than another."

"If your highness indeed wish to honour me with your confidence, it is my duty to choose that which will be agreeable to you, and thank you for it; my devotion and discretion are equal to the trust."

"I know that, but you do not know how unfortunate I have been, and am still. I loved my husband, and indeed sometimes I fancy that I love him yet. I loved him with boundless affection, and perhaps without reason. Listen to me, listen to what I will tell you, and you will see that all the fault has not been mine. The duke of Bourbon, instead of respecting the tenderness of my affection and the sensibility of my mind, set me the example of inconstancy and even of infidelity. When we were but two years married he became attached to Mdlle. Camilhac, my *dame de compagnie*, and carried this scandalous conduct to such an excess, that I was obliged to request Mdlle. Camilhac to leave my house. This act, which I consider just and honourable, was the cause of the insult that I received at the *bal d'opéra*, and of the duel that followed."

She also told me that, in 1780, Madame Monaco, another mistress of the duke, made him write to his wife, requesting her not to go to the races at Chantilly. This enraged the duchess, particularly as she knew the source from which it originated.

The duke afterwards had a *liaison* with Madame de Courtebonne, another lady belonging to the duchess; and took so little pains to conceal this intrigue from the world, that he fought a duel with M. d'Aroult, captain of his own guard, whom he suspected of being his rival.

These were not all. This list of his mistresses, so far from being completed, is only just commenced, if I were to name them all. For a great many years he was attached to Mdlle. Michelot, of the opera, by whom he had a child; who was not only called Bourbon, but by order of the king was held at the baptismal font by Mdlle. de Condé and the prince of Soubise. All these things were known to the duchess, who could not conceal her indignation; and she was at the same time the object of the most unjust and cruel suspicions. It is not true that she wished for a separation, or prevented the interference of her father, the duke of

Orleans, but quite the contrary. The duke of Bourbon wrote a most revolting and incredible letter to the king.

Here is an account of the duel. The count of Artois became an admirer of Mdlle. Camilhac, after that the duke of Bourbon had transferred his affections to another; and went with her to a *bal d'opéra* on the Shrove Tuesday of 1778, where they saw the duchess of Bourbon leaning on the arm of Mdlle. de Camilhac's brother-in-law. This lady pointed out the duchess to her lover, and requested him to be particularly disagreeable to her. This prince, as everybody knows, was very thoughtless, and very much in love; and when he met the duchess he affected to think her a person of bad character, such as are often met at these balls, and addressed her in the most insulting manner. Her grace, who could not restrain her anger, tore off his mask, and he, equally furious, caught hers and broke it on her face, but could not take it off. The duchess had the prudence not to say anything, and, being of a forgiving disposition, forgot the insult and everything about it. But not so the count of Artois, he told it publicly to every person who would listen to the tale. The duke of Bourbon was not satisfied with the apology the count made before the king and royal family, but fought a duel with him in the Bois de Boulogne. The duchess could have avoided all this had she been more prudent ; but she adored her husband, and her heart was broken by his infidelity. She had dismissed this lady because she was her rival in the duke's affections ; but Mdlle. de Camilhac never forgave her, and had brought about this scene to revenge the affront she had herself received. But however much the duchess may be blamed for the manner in which she acted, her intentions were most certainly justifiable.

The count of Artois gave a lengthened account of this adventure at the ball, at a supper at Madame Jules de Polignac's, and it was repeated to the duchess, who was most indignant. Everybody, but especially the ladies, took her part, but blamed her for not having told her husband and family, which she had not done, thinking it would only be the cause of greater dissensions, as it eventually was.

The prince de Condé waited on the king, and requested his interference. His Majesty sent for both parties, had them introduced into his cabinet, and, as head of the family, counselled them to be friends, and forget the offence. They were apparently reconciled ; but neither the duke nor duchess of Bourbon was satisfied. The duke could not directly challenge the brother of the king, but he did not conceal his resentment; and the descendant of Henry IV. did not require much provocation to consent to cross swords with him. They went to the Bois de Boulogne, whither the good citizens of Paris hastened in crowds. The count of Artois' sword got entangled under the duke's arm, who was considered to be wounded, and this was sufficient to satisfy the laws of honour, and the duel was stopped. The princes embraced, satisfied that each had done his duty. The duke of Bourbon and the prince of Condé thanked the count of Artois for having done them the honour of crossing swords with a prince of their house; and the count went to apologise to the duchess of Bourbon, which he did, treating the whole affair in a jesting manner. Perhaps he thought this the wisest manner of acting; but his visit had been so long delayed, and his tone so hurtful to the personal dignity of the duchess, that in spite of all her efforts she could not prevent herself from treating her cousin with the greatest coolness.

In the evening the count of Artois was very coolly received at the opera by the public, whilst the Condés, on the contrary, were greeted with loud cheers. The princess was blamed again for this; but what part had she in it? The Bourbon Palace was all day crowded with visitors, whom the prince de Condé would receive in spite of his daughter-in-law; and she was blamed for assuming an insolent rivality.

The count of Artois is however a very agreeable prince, endowed with excellent qualities, and is both noble and generous; but he was misled by his mistress in this affair.

The duchess of Bourbon has not much affection for her brother, the duke de Chartres; she cannot forget the manner in which he behaved on this occasion, and the unkindness with which he said:

"She is neither my wife nor daughter; and it is no business of mine to mix myself up with such follies."

Before this duel of the count of Artois, the duchess de Bourbon had another unfortunate adventure that made a great deal of noise. She met one evening at the *bal d'opéra* the princess de Hénin, who was most dreadfully jealous of M. de Coigny, and who, affecting not to know the duchess, said the most violent and unjust things to her. But what does that prove? Violence and passion on the part of the princess de Hénin, and perhaps a little coquetry on the part of the duchess. People used to tell the most unfounded stories of this duchess; amongst others that she had been forbidden to appear at Chantilly, and this was the origin of all the calumnies that have been propagated against her.

Poor princess ! she suffered severely for the faults of her mother.

CHAPTER IX.

The cadogans—Conspiracy against powder—Fair and red hair—Archduke Maximilian—Prince of Hesse Darmstadt—M. de Kellermann—Birth of Princess Alexandrina—The ladies' *aunts* and the ladies' *nieces*—Dignitaries of the chapter of Remiremont—Death of the count de Waldner—On mourning—The bailiwick of Saxe is asked for my uncle—Letter of the Grand-duchess Marie to the Archduke Maximilian—The Teutonic order—Mergentheim—M. Michel—Command of the duchess of Bourbon.

The duchess of Bourbon had introduced at the court of Montbéliard, a fashion that we all hastened to adopt; it was that of cadogans, hitherto worn only by gentlemen. Nothing could be prettier or more gallant-looking when one wore with it the little hat and plume. However, it was feared that this fashion would not last. The king detested it, ridiculed it continually, and even spoke of it with bitterness, which was so contrary to his usual manner.

One day he entered the apartments of her Majesty, wearing a *chignon*. The queen began to laugh.

"Why should you laugh, madame; we must

try to distinguish ourselves from the ladies, who have adopted, in their costume, fashions which had always been exclusively ours."

Marie Antoinette understood the reproof, and the masculine costumes fell gradually into disuse.

A revolution took place this year in the dress of children, with which I at least was delighted. Let us picture to ourselves a little creature of nine or ten years of age, his hair all powdered and pomaded, and rolled in large stiff curls round his head, with a queùe appending behind. Add to this, a hat under his arm, and a sword by his side. Since the revolution of which I speak, all this has been done away with; children's hair is much neater, cut close, and unpowdered.

A very pretty little boy was one day introduced at Etupes; he was son to a gentleman of the neighbourhood, and entered the room dressed after the fashion of his grandfather, holding himself quite straight, his sword and embroidered coat attracting a great deal of his attention. Nothing could be more ridiculous. Mdlle. de Domsdorff proposed to me, in a low voice, to form a conspiracy to emancipate this child, and dress him according to the improved mode. She drew the mother of the little man aside, whilst the father was engaged in paying his respects, and managed so well, that this lady soon shared in the project of delivering her poor heir from his slavery. The conspirators, fortified by the consent of the mother, who wished to appear ignorant of their proceedings, brought the child into Madame Hendel's apartment, whither they summoned the valet-de-chambre, hair-dresser to the young princes. In the course of half an hour, a complete transformation was effected, and the little gentleman returned to the drawing-room very much improved in his appearance. Many and various were the exclamations with which his entrance was greeted. The father, at first discontented, dared not to take the thing in bad part, and in the end admitted the advantages of the metamorphosis.

Ladies wore at that time Iris powder, of which the shade was a little more than white, and which gave them all the appearance of being red-haired. This mode was probably introduced to reconcile the long-standing rivalry between fair and red-haired beauties, each party, it must be admitted, having a large number of partizans. In truth, fashion is a source of many follies, which only tend to disfigure the work of nature; and still this admission, which is universally made, does not prevent us thinking ourselves much more charming when wrapped in the disguises that she has invented.

Several princes arrived successively at Montbéliard; in the first place, the Archduke Maximilian, who, if he does not possess much talent, is extremely amiable.

I was honoured with his particular attention, and the constant subject of his conversation was a certain citizen whose house spoiled the prospect from one of his castles: the worthy archduke could not thing of driving the man away.

"He would not sell me the house. I have been advised to seize upon it, and oblige him to take the money; but I will not do so—the poor man was born there, his father died there. I can understand his feelings, baroness; still this red roof annoys me very much." And the same story was begun again and again.

"The archduke has only one idea in his brain," said the prince.

"Apparently," replied M. de Vernouillet, "because he has not the means of changing it."

After the archduke came Duke Peter of Holstein-Oldenburg; he who had left the administration to his cousin, as I mentioned. He played chess admirably well, and won from all our professors, even from the councillor Rossel, who chanted his ill luck in a new dithyrambic.

The hereditary prince of Hesse-Darmstadt, afterwards grand-duke, passed also some days at Etupes. He adored Madame Angélique de Messy, a lady of Remiremont, very much, and stayed a little longer on that account. But he soon grew tired of the whim and departed. M. d'Oberkirch came for me about the month of August. He passed part of his time at home, sometimes went on a visit to some of our relatives, and sometimes remained at Etupes. He was quite contented. The duke de Chartres, at the solicitation of the duchess of Bourbon, had got my brother-in-law, Baron Sampson d'Oberkirch, translated into the regiment of hussars, which had just been created, and of which he was colonel. He was to assist M. de Kellermann, lieutenant-colonel, in the formation of this regiment. M. de Kellermann, had distinguished himself in the seven years' war.

My husband was very grateful for this favour : a like honour was accorded at the same time to the young baron de Bock.

We had the happiness of learning the birth of Alexandrina Paulowna, grand-duchess of Russia ; her dear mother was in good health, though she had suffered a great deal at the birth of the child, and during some months before.

The princess de Montbéliard had been very uneasy on this acount. The absence of her beloved child, and at so great a distance, caused her unceasing solicitude. She paid a high price for the rank to which her children has attained.

The same letter of the duchess of Bourbon, that informed me of the nomination of my brother-in-law, gave me also some court news. Baron Breteuil had been made a member of the council, the marquis de Noailles taking his place as ambassador at the court of Russia. Baron de Staël-Holstein, the Swedish minister, had presented his letters of credence to the king. This is the same baron de Staël who afterwards married Mdlle. Necker. The count de Provence had set out to make a tour through Lorraine. He visited his regiment of carbineers at Metz, as well as the gendarmerie at Luneville, and all the garrisons on his route. A visit of the prince de Montbéliard to his royal highness, was for a moment spoken of, but the princess would not allow him to leave her, as he had been recently ill.

Strasburg lost a celebrated savant, Mr. Spielmann, botanist and chemist. He had created the botanic gardens and beautiful greenhouses of this city, so much admired by strangers. He had also founded a school, now one of the richest establishments of the kind. He is much regretted at Etupes, where he used to send beautiful flowers. I do not know who will perform that office now.

Throughout Lorraine, Alsace, and even at Paris, there was nothing spoken of at that time, but the lawsuit between the ladies-*niece* and the ladies-*aunts* of the chapter of Remiremont, which is not at all astonishing when one considers the respectability of this chapter, the importance of the contested dignity, and the rank of the persons who were concerned in this lawsuit. Each party had distributed numerous memoirs. One side had made an appeal from the judgment recorded against it the preceding year by the parliament of Nancy.

The ladies-*niece* assert that the chapter is only a lay body, and that the ladies-*aunts* have no claim to the votes of the ladies-*niece*. All awaited with impatience the decision of the council, to whom the appeal had been made. The case was tried in the presence of the king, and the election of Madame de Ferette to the dignity of secrète, lately held by Madame de Lenencourt, was confirmed. The opposing ladies were nonsuited, and the ladies-*niece* triumphed over the ladies-*aunts*.

"It is not that their case is better," added M. de Vernouillet; "it is simply because they are younger."

The dean of Murbach, to whom he repeated this bit of nonsense, told him very seriously that the age of the ladies had nothing to do with the matter.

We were all much amused by this debate, which the marquis, according to his custom, pushed to an extremity. We were obliged to impose silence upon him.

The dignities of these ladies were considerable. Her royal highness Christina of Saxony was abbess. There was then the deanness, the secretary, the censière, the dame du Pens, the aumônier, the boursière d'argent, the boursière de grains, the dame du sceau, the dames chantres, the treasurer, the theière, the dame de la fabrique, coadjutress, Princess Charlotte of Lorraine, and thirty two canonesses. At the time that I am now writing (1789), Princess Louisa of Condé is abbess of this important order. The royal family of France has numbered many abbesses amongst its daughters.

I had now to put on mourning for my uncle, who was old, and had been a very long time ill. My father succeeded to the title of count, which will descend from him to my brother. Family mourning is often but a mere ceremony, mine, though not a very deep grief, was not a trifling one, as I participated warmly in everything that interested my father.

Mourning is not the evidence of grief, it is merely the fulfilment of a duty towards the dead; it is a homage rendered to a relative or to one's family. Even if etiquette pretended to limit the duration of grief, it would still be no reason for not wearing mourning. The family circle, being in its greater or less extent the base of society, one cannot break a single link in the chain without injuring it in all its parts. It was a good regulation to fix a time, during which mourning should be worn, and it would be unwise either to abridge or extend its duration. In the latter case one may wish to appear more tender-hearted or better than others, but the day on which such persons lay aside their mourning the public has a right to suppose, and with justice, that their grief is lessened. Such conduct gives to others the right and the power of pronouncing upon the extent or depth of our feelings, which must be wounding to the sentiments of a delicate-minded person. What our fathers have done and regulated has been wisely done and wisely arranged.

In '86 two of our acquaintances, M. de Butler and the marquis de Bombelle, obtained the rank of brigadier. We were returned to Strasburg, where we saw a great deal of society. The regiments in garrison were the Hesse-Darmstadt infantry, that of Foix, Alsace, and Lofère. We knew a great number of the officers: it rained visits from morning till night. We were besides very much occupied in endeavouring to obtain the bailiwick of Saxony for my uncle, commander of the Teutonic order. The grand-duchess Marie wrote, at my request, to the Archduke Maximilian, coadjutor of Cologne, and of the bishopric of Munster, brother to our queen Marie Antoinette. It was he who had come to Etupes. He was grand-master of the Teutonic order.

"St. Petersburg, $\frac{16}{27}$ March 1784.

"Monsieur,

"I am so persuaded of the friendship of your royal highness that I address myself to you with confidence, praying you to use your influence for the commander de Waldner, and to aid him in obtaining the post of coadjutor of the bailiwick of Saxony. I am deeply interested in this matter, wishing to do a service to the commander, who is a most excellent man; and I also take a lively interest in it through the friendship that binds me to his niece, the baroness d'Oberkirch. Both these considerations have induced me to ask this favour of your royal highness, being certain that as you love to oblige, you will pay attention to my request, and thus augment the sincere attachment I bear you, and in which I am joined by my husband, who prays me to present you his compliments.

"I remain, with the most profound respect, your royal highness' affectionate cousin,

"MARIE FŒDEROWNA."

It may be remembered that I promised to collect in these memoirs, as far as I possibly could, every detail about ancient institutions. I would wish that the memories of things gone by should be better preserved than through the echoes of tradition. My grandchildren will be grateful to me for this care. I will say a few words here about the Teutonic knights, their institutions, and their importance.

The first grand-master was Henry de Walpol. In 1150 Saladin drove them from Jerusalem: they retired to Acre. Under the emperor Frederick II. they conquered Prussia, then an idolatrous country. They retained it as a fief, and built Marienbourg at the commencement of the thirteenth century. A candidate for admission into this order should be German, and able to prove nobility of descent both from father and mother for several generations.

When their grand-master Albert de Brandenbourg embraced Lutheranism and married, he seized on Prussia as a hereditary possession. A portion of the order protested against this usurpation, and elected as grand-master Gauthier de Cronberg, who transferred the seat of the grand-mastership to Mergentheim, in Franconia, where it still exists. The arms of the grand-master are—a cross patonée, *sable*, charged with a cross fleur-de-lis, *or*, surcharged on fess with an escutcheon, *or*, charged with an eagle displayed, *sable*.

The sable cross was given by the emperor Henry VI.

The gold cross by John, king of Jerusalem.

The imperial eagle by the emperor Frederick II.

And the fleur-de-lis was added by St. Louis.

This cross is suspended round the neck by a chain of gold.

There are twelve commanders of the order in Germany.

The grand-master is prince of the empire, and takes his place at the Diet next after the archbishop of Besançon. The provincial commanders of the grand bailiwicks of Alsace, Burgundy, and Coblentz, were also regarded as resident nobility, and as such summoned to the imperial diet, and those of the circles.

Princes of the royal blood, and the sons of sovereigns, have thought themselves honoured by being admitted into this order, one of the most noble in Christendom. The pretender to this dignity should have distinguished himself in at least three battles.

Although the grand-master and the greater number of the knights are Catholics, still, as there are many commanderies established in Protestant countries, Lutherans and Calvinists are received as members.

Each knight wears on his breast the cross of the order, which is sable bound with silver, and suspended by a gold chain.

I have had these details from well-informed persons, or have extracted them from authentic documents. After reading through folios, I only retain what is indispensable. I have a kind of mania for these researches, which M. d'Oberkirch sometimes laughs at, and says that I ought to have been a doctor in a cap and gown. On this account he never thanks me for a discovery. He came one day with great ceremony to bring me to the house of a poor artist who had consumed his time and knowledge in constructing a machine that could imitate thunder and the most terrible tempests. This invention was intended for the opera at Paris. This same Michel had at his house a model of the machinery by which the rock that serves as pedestal to the statue of Peter the Great had been transported by Falconner. This certainly interested me.

We were to set off immediately. The duchess of Bourbon had done me the honour of writing to me several times to say that she *would* have *her* trip to Paris as well as the grand-duchess. She was so earnest in her request that it would have been impertinent to refuse. M. d'Oberkirch felt that as well as I, and yielded. We set off in the month of May, '84.

CHAPTER X.

Paris and the duchess of Bourbon—The Tuileries—Gentlemen leave off swords—The 'carabas' and the 'pots-de-chambre'—Madame de Dietrich—M. Ochs of Basle—Three amiable women—M. Quinquet and M.Lavoisier—'The Marriage of Figaro'—Verses—Mdlle. Contat—The young postulant—The devotee and Peter the Cruel—Baron de Thunn—M Thelusson—M. Desguerres—Duchess de la Vallière—Duke de Chatillon—Supper in the open air at the duchess de Bourbon's—Baroness de Zuckmantel—Marquis de Deux Ponts—Forbach—The Bethune Pologne—What that means—The new Minotaur—Princess de Bouillon—Rodogune—The queen in the grove of Apollo—Dinner at Madame de Mackan's—M. de Villefort—Duchess de Beauvron—Marquis de Harcourt—No more eating—Expedient—The prince de Conti.

It was with pleasure, I must confess, that I beheld Paris again. It was probable that my present sojourn there would be as pleasant as the former. If I no longer enjoyed the happiness of being with the Grand-duchess Marie, I found in the duchess de Bourbon the greatest kindness and amiability, and the most sincere desire of making everything agreeable to me. If it were not the same for my heart, accustomed from infancy to love her, my first friend, this new affection gave an additional charm to all the pleasures I enjoyed at Paris. My friendship for the one was the result of a union of the tenderest sympathies of the heart; my friendship for the other was founded upon a perfect accordance in our intellectual tastes.

On the very day of my arrival I had the honour of paying my respects to her serene highness: she seemed delighted to see me; my reception was most flattering.

"Abandon your Alsace for a little while, my dear baroness; it is, no doubt, a beautiful country, but one knows the world there only through the trumpet of fame, and the intelligence too is communicated through the smaller end: here, you are in your proper place, and you know with whom you speak."

After this visit, M. d'Oberkirch proposed to go to the opera, where 'Iphigenia in Aulide' was to be performed. I was very much pleased with the piece. Once thrown into the whirl of fashionable life, my husband felt a greater desire to remain there than I. After a few days of this gay toil, he begins to like this mode of living, though he could content himself alone in the country. He never regrets what he cannot obtain, and he enjoys thoroughly all that he possesses: it is an excellent trait in his character.

After the opera we went to the Tuileries, then the fashionable promenade; but as the Parisians do everything through caprice, they selected one alley, and would not take a step in any of the others. All were suffocating; some persons almost fought. The buttons of the gentlemen's coats carried off the lace trimming of the ladies' mantelets; falbalas were torn by the pommels of swords, and flounces of point lace were sometimes seen dangling from the end of a scabbard.

Gentlemen began about this time to go about unarmed, and wore swords only in full dress. The humbler classes imitated them, and fashion was more powerful than authority could have been. If an order had been published commanding that swords should be laid aside, nobody would have obeyed the edict. A young gentleman who wished to be *Englified* laid aside his sword; his friends imitated him, and in a short time it was the mode to appear swordless. One fool invents a fashion, and thousands adopt it—wise people must follow; and thus the French nobility laid aside a usage which the example of their fathers had consecrated through centuries. Fashion often commits strange follies.

There were, it was said, some ladies of a *certain* character at the Tuileries, who, at the first glance, could not be easily recognized as such: these women dressed with propriety, wishing to have the appearance of honest citizens.

22nd May.—I went to visit Madame de Bernhold, and went again in the evening to the promenade; first to the Tuileries, and afterwards to the Champs Elysées.

The promenade in the Champs Elysées is insupportable. No fountains; all is dreary regularity: and the dust is particularly annoying, which, on account of the vicinity of the high road leading to Versailles, is very abundant. On this road one sees 'carabas' and 'pots-de-chambres' continually passing, for the most part filled with petitioners. The carabas are heavy carriages containing twenty persons drawn by eight horses, and which occupy six and a half hours in going from Paris to Versailles: it is a curious sight—all these people heaped together. As to the pots-de-chambres, besides the six passengers, there are also two monkeys and two rabbits: the rabbits are in front beside the coachman, and the monkeys behind, clinging on as best they can. All that appeared to me so droll; we have not an idea of such things in provincial towns.

My days and evenings were more at my own disposal than during my first visit to Paris,—I was no longer under the sweet necessity of bearing my dear princess company. I was in the habit of visiting in the evenings, and wiling away the time in agreeable conversation. Everywhere I heard rumours of the possibility of a war between Russia and the sultan. I was grievously vexed on account of the grand-duchess, whose husband would probably be called away. I wrote to her and the princess de Montbéliard before going to bed.

23rd May.—I went at an early hour to Madame Dietrich, *née* Ochs, whose husband, Baron Dietrich, is secrétaire général des Suisses in the Grisons, of which the count d'Artois is colonel-general. This prince was appointed when very young to this office, on which he entered after the disgrace of the duke of Choiseul, who had held it previously. The count d'Artois was very much attached to M. Dietrich, and prized his intelligence highly. M. de Dietrich is in right of his father—who held the honorary title during his life—interpreter to the order of military merit.

The elder M. de Dietrich is very rich, and possesses, amongst others, the lordship 'du Ban de la Roche,' in the Vosges: he is son of a magistrate of the sovereign council of Alsace. This family, though not of the ancient nobility, is highly respected. The eldest son, M. Hans Jean de Dietrich, married Mdlle. de Glaubitz, by which alliance he became connected with the greater number of the Alsatian nobility. The other brother, of whom I have spoken, was appointed royal commissioner to visit the mines, arsenals, and forests of the kingdom.

The father of Madame de Dietrich, M. Ochs, is a fierce democrat, as well as his daughter, who has succeeded in inspiring her husband, in some degree at least, with these sentiments. M. de Dietrich is not the less intellectual, and admired in the best society. Madame de Dietrich lives generally at Paris: she is small, lively, witty, and extremely piquant.*

Madame de Dietrich, wife of the *Ammeister*, and cousin to those I have mentioned, is a woman perfectly amiable in every sense of the word.

" There are but three ladies in all Alsace," said Cardinal Rohan, "who possess the 'accomplishment' of conversation: these are, Mesdames de Dietrich, de Berekheim de Schoppenwyr, and d'Oberkirch; the others speak, but do not converse."

The bishop was very kind in putting me on this list. Though my vanity was flattered, my modesty refused this distinction. It may be that I like conversation and seek it, but that is only going half way.

We took a box at the 'Comédie Française' for the 'Marriage of Figaro.' We were already acquainted with the subject, and were anxious to see it *à la scène.* It had been performed for the first time on the 27th April preceding. We were obliged to fight our way through the crowd: it was even worse than at the Tuileries. The house was lighted by a new invention of M. Quinquet's, to which he had given his name, and which had succeeded very well. This soft and brilliant light, free from smoke, is not expensive, and is now universally adopted. It is said that M. Quinquet is indebted for this discovery to M. Lavoisier, *fermier-général*, and who is a great chemist: he made a present of the invention to his protégé, hoping to enrich him, and his project has not failed. M. de Lavoisier spends part of his fortune in scientific experiments: he is son-in-law to M. Paulze, president of 'La Ferme Général,' one of the most distinguished financiers of the day.

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* M. Ochs, born at Basle in 1749, effected the Helvetic revolution in 1798, in conjunction with Brime and Colonel Laharpe.—*Editor's Note.*

M. de Beaumarchais' piece attracted all Paris; everybody spoke ill of it, and everybody went to see it. It was considered inferior to the 'Barber of Seville,' and its success was attributed to the base flattery addressed to the pit. Besides the royal family, the princes of the blood, the entire court hurried eagerly to the first representations. My opinion does not coincide with that of others:

I have seldom expressed it, but I will write it in these memoirs. Those who at a late period will read it, shall see whether I have been mistaken, and posterity will confirm my judgment.

The 'Marriage of Figaro' is, perhaps, the most witty theatrical piece that has ever been written, not even excepting the works of M. de Voltaire. It is sparkling,—it is a succession of fireworks. All the rules of art are transgressed from one end to the other: still during the four hours that the performance lasted, I did not feel one moment's *ennui.* It is an immortal masterpiece, I would say, of impropriety; and still this piece will be read, will be often performed, and will always amuse. It appears to me that the nobility showed a great want of tact in applauding it, which was nothing less than giving themselves a slap in the face. They laughed at their own expense, and, what was worse, they made others laugh too. They will repent it yet. The jests that amused them were directed against themselves, and they do not see it. Their own caricature has been held up before them, and they replied, "that is it; it is very like." What inexplicable blindness!

Some days before I went to the theatre, printed copies of the following verses were scattered in profusion through the house:

On our boards, in scenic splendour,
  Lo! a monster form appears;
Degraded now, *la scène* she renders,
  And on baffled justice leers
Shameful drama! where each actor
  A living form of vice is seen;
Where no sinful trait is lack'd, nor
  Her ever-coarse licentious mien.
Avarice here, triumphant smiling,
In Barthlomo holds up the sin;
The suborner's dark beguiling
  Almavive is perfect in.
His better half, adultress horrid!
  Each crime is here with rapture sung;
Marceline, with shameless forehead,
  And Basil's lying and aspic tongue,
And Fauchette is too tame our feelings to move,
Like a cherub she seems, all burning with love,
  The page a licensed libertine.
With the spirit of all is Bridoisin rife,
And Figaro's self is drawn from the life,
  So true that we start at each line.
The pit overpowered and delighted must be,
  These horrors have nothing appalled;
All these vices concentered they now fain would see,
  And the author was called.

These verses are true only to a certain degree. Bridoisin showed much talent in his stupidity; but all the other actors were as clever as he.

The piece was admirably well performed. Mdlle. Contat especially, in the part of the countess, seemed to me adorable. The men were all distracted about her. She is a fascinating creature; I can comprehend the enthusiasm she inspires. It would be impossible to find more talent, a more elegant deportment, and in every sense a more accomplished actress than this lady. On leaving the opera I returned home, my heart oppressed by what I had seen, and enraged against myself for having been amused. This may explain the secret of the success that attended this piece, and the inconsistency that resulted from this success. People were angry at having been amused.

24*th May*.—I took it into my head to-day to make a circuit of the churches, with a young lady of Strasburg, who had entered the carmelite convent as postulant. Her parents had introduced her to me before I left Alsace: they were very desirous that she should not enter a convent, but she persevered in her resolution, spite of their entreaties. I obtained permission to bring her out sometimes: I wished to amuse her, and put her idea of entering a cloister to flight. She would not accompany me anywhere but to the churches; she refused all other promenades. She was certainly one of the prettiest girls in France. Fashioning her opinions on those of her confessor, she had declared war against her own beauty, believing it to be an instrument of perdition if she remained in the world. I employed those means that are generally found most efficacious, but she would not listen to anything. I took her in succession to the Val de Grâce, to St. Geneviève, to St. Nicholas du Chardomet. Whilst I examined the pictures and the architecture, she remained on her knees at prayer, her hands joined and her head bent down. I brought her to the Sorbonne, afterwards to the Luxembourg gardens, where her beauty made a sensation. She begged me to bring her away, when she perceived that she was stared at. I went in the evening to the theatre: the entertainment was 'Peter the Cruel,' by M. de Dubelloy, and the 'Babillard.' I did not admire 'Peter the Cruel;' it seemed to me to justify the anecdote which at that time formed a subject of drawing-room tattle.

A worthy devotee, having read 'Peter the Cruel,' accused herself of it to her confessor, a man of talent and good sense. The penitent was very contrite, and expected a long and severe reproof.

"I am about," said the abbé, "to impose a penance upon you, a more severe penance than you anticipate, but which will certainly expiate your fault. You have read 'Peter the Cruel' once; well, you must read it a second time."

25*th May.*—I went to the baths very early. I was to breakfast with the baron de Thunn, plenipotentiary from his serene highness the duke of Wurtemberg: he lived in the Chaussée d'Antin. Several persons had been invited. We were all very gay, and it was agreed that we should go to visit the mansion of Madame de Thelusson. I had seen this building during my former visit; it was not then finished. It was still one of the fashionable wonders.

Madame Thelusson is widow of a banker of Geneva, in the Rue de Provence, opposite to the Rue Neuve d'Artois, the famous hôtel of which I have already spoken. The building is a rotunda, surrounded by a beautiful colonnade, with an immense arcade in front, facing the street. It attracts universal admiration, and does great honour to the architect Leroux. Madame Thelusson was Madame de Lascaris.*

The Messieurs Thelusson are from Geneva, but their family is of French origin. They say that they are descended from Frederick Thelusson, lord of Fleshières, baron of St. Saxhorn in Lyonnais, who accompanied Philip VI., king of France, to Flanders in 1328. This is an ancient lineage for financiers. Isaac Thelusson, envoy from Geneva to the court of Louis XIV., left several children, of whom one was in partnership with M. Necker, banker at Paris. The estate of Domans in Champagne belonged to them. Another Thelusson went to England, where he made an immense fortune.*

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* M. de Thelusson had several children in his marriage with Mdlle. de Lascaris: the baroness Adolphe de Maussion, the marchioness de Bores. M. Thelusson's second wife was Mdlle. Baguenault. The marchioness de Larochelambert was the child of this second marriage.—*Editor's Note.*

From the Thelusson hôtel we went to the house of Desguerres, a celebrated chemist, who lived in the Rue St. Honoré. I wished to see some furniture, but could scarcely obtain an entrance, so great was the crowd and so anxious were all to obtain a sight of a beautifully-wrought sideboard: it was intended for the duke of Northumberland, and was to be carried to England. In the evening I visited the duchess de la Vallière, now in the third year of her widowhood. Her husband had been grand-falconer to the king, and was a man of considerable merit, who devoted a good deal of time to literary pursuits. He left at his death, in his castle of Montrouge, an extensive library and many valuable pictures. He was expensive in his tastes, and was a great favourite with the ladies. His only daughter is duchess de Chatillon.

Madame de Vallière was once of transcendent loveliness, and though no longer young, she is still very handsome: she was a Mdlle. de Crussel, and had been very much admired. Her appearance was most dignified, and she received her visitors with the easy grace of a woman of rank, accustomed to the highest society. Her son-in-law, the duke de

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* His son was created Baron Rendelsham in 1806. His grandson enjoys the title at present.

Chatillon, died of the small-pox. Her second granddaughter had married the prince de Tremouille, whilst the eldest espoused the duke de Crussel, her uncle, after the fashion of Bretagne.*

It was with much pleasure that I met the countess de Bruce, who was then living in the Champs Elysées. We spoke much of my dear princess—and no wonder. Alas! she may never see her family again. The grandeur of princes is often purchased by the sacrifice of their affections; and how often may they not repeat that line of Boileau à propos of Louis XIV.:

> Gemir de sa grandeur qui l'attache au rivage.

The duchess of Bourbon gave us a supper in the open air, at her mansion in the Rue de Varenne, where she had a beautiful garden. She did not keep a very large establishment, but everything was in perfectly good taste. The supper went off delightfully. The Countess Julie de Sereux, lady-in-waiting to her serene highness, did the honours of the feast. This lady is a canoness. I must not forget to say that the duchess of Bourbon had a dowry of two hundred thousand livres a-year, which, at her separation from her husband, was given back to her. The king further insisted that the prince de Condé should allow her twenty-five thousand livres, which, with her income of twenty-five thousand livres as princess of the blood, enabled her to support a position suitable to her rank.

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* The children of Madame de Crussel, afterwards duchess d'Uzes, were, the Countess Alexis de Rongé, lady in waiting to the dauphiness, and the duke de Crussel, father of John, the present duke d'Uzes, married to Mdlle. de Talhouet.—*Editor's Note.*

Her serene highness overwhelmed me with the kindest attentions; it would be impossible to be more gracious, more affectionate, or more affable.

I became sincerely attached to her. She seemed to think it a duty to try to make me forget the difference of our rank. What happy hours have I passed with her! Her brilliant intellect and originality of mind made her conversation most agreeable. She had a most racy manner of relating an anecdote, and knew everything about every one. We sat up late on the evening of the supper, but time had flown by pleasantly. The weather was delightful. The garden was lighted with variegated lamps of a new invention, and which sparkled like precious stones. This style was called 'à la Vénitienne.' The duchess of Bourbon is very fond of music, and had secured on that evening the best performers.

26*th May.*—Morning visits are very much in fashion. Acquaintances run to each other's houses, each certain that the other is not at home; but it is the reigning mode. I visited the baroness de

Zuckmantel, who so worthily represents our province of Alsace, at Paris. She leads a gay life; the circle of her acquaintance is very extensive, and her name of weight in the fashionable world.

I met at her house the marquis des Deux Ponts, count de Forbach, natural son of the reigning duke des Deux Ponts, and of the countess de Forbach. He had, a little before, married Mdlle. de Béthune, of the branch called Béthune-Pologne. I will explain the cause of 'Pologne' being added to the family name.

A marquis de la Grange d'Arquien had two daughters. One married, *by chance*, the great Sobieski. To say that she married "by chance," is only a *façon de parler*. It is said that the marquis d'Arquien had taken charge of this child, who was natural daughter to Marie de Gonzaga,—she who was loved by M. de Cinq-Mars, and who became afterwards queen of Poland. The father of Marie d'Arquien was no other than Louis de Bourbon, prince of Condé. The queen of Poland sent for this Marie d'Arquien, and married her first to Prince Sacrowiski, who died whilst she was still very young; and afterwards to John Sobieski, who became the great Sobieski, king of Poland.

When Marie d'Arquien became a queen, she asked Louis XIV. to send her sister's husband,

M. de Bethune, as ambassador to Poland. Louis XIV. granted her request, and she thus secured the enjoyment of her sister's society. The surname of Pologne remained affixed to this branch. They were allied to the Stuarts, a daughter of Sobieski having married the last Pretender.

The second son of the duke des Deux Ponts married Mdlle. de Polastron. The members of this second branch des Deux Ponts were very agreeable people. The marquis des Deux Ponts related, in a very interesting manner, a little story, of which I took a note, attracted by the tincture of the marvellous that pervades it, and which possesses more or less charm for all.

In the city of Deux Ponts (called, in German, Zweybrücken), the chief town of the principality, there flows a little river called the Plye, or Erlbach. This river is looked upon in the country as a kind of Minotaur—it every year demands two victims; and certain it is that, from time immemorial, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, two persons have every year perished in its waves. This year, '84, a handsome young man, an officer, and friend to the chevalier, had paid the tribute. He was passionately in love with a young lady, and was displaying his horsemanship before her window—she lived on the bank of the river—when, suddenly, the horse started, plunged violently, became wholly unmanageable, and, backing on the footway of the bridge with a desperate bound, sprang over the parapet. The poor officer was killed on the spot: his body was not found until next day. The young lady almost lost her senses.

There is a legend attached to this river of Plye. The old people assert, very seriously, that a serpent once ravaged the country, devouring men and beasts. A certain holy hermit forced the demon to retire into the river; but the power of the holy man was not sufficient to subdue entirely the evil thing. It demanded two victims yearly, and for ever. How selfish the world is! The inhabitants of Deux Ponts, caring little for their descendants, accepted these conditions. The serpent has never failed to assert his right. One year, the 31st of December had arrived, and no one had yet perished. The inhabitants, believing themselves delivered from this dreadful scourge, were about to proclaim public rejoicings; when, on that evening, a mother and son were drowned. The public joy was suddenly changed to woe.

The marquis de Forbach was still grieving for the loss of his friend and brother-in-arms. He had a firm belief in the disastrous influence of the Plye; perhaps he believed, also, in the existence of the serpent.

After Madame de Zuckmantel, I visited Madame de la Salle, and the princess de Bouillon. The latter had a lovely face, and there was something natural and unaffected in her manner, which gave her a powerful charm, rendered still stronger by its contrast to the affectation then à-la-mode. Her humour is variable; but she uses no disguise, and lets herself appear such as she is. This may be a defect, but it does not render her less charming. These are defects that seem to be auxiliaries to the power of pleasing. It has been often said, that the most fascinating persons owed their influence rather to their defects than to their good qualities. Thus, in coquetry, inconsistency is often more attractive than solid virtue. Madame de Bouillon is lively, impetuous, imprudent. She is, however, beloved; and her society sought by women as well as by men. She excites the curiosity of the former; she awes the latter, and restrains them within the bounds of admiration and respect. There is an air of genuine royalty about her; she salutes, with a grace and dignity that become her, *à merveille.* She knows how to give each, *when she wishes,* precisely his due. Everybody is delighted to see her: as for me, I ought to be more charmed than others, for never has a shade of caprice dimmed the sunshine of our intercourse.

On this evening 'Rodogune' was performed at the Comédie Française. M. d'Oberkirch is a great admirer of the works of Corneille, and particularly of this piece. He would never tire of seeing and reading it. We went to the theatre. I was very much interested by a young lady, who wept bitterly all the time, and repeated,

" I am afraid of this tall woman."

She meant Cleopatra. She was carried out; she would have certainly fainted at the fifth act.

Before supper, I went to visit the shop ' Petit Dunkerque,' where there are all kinds of fanciful trifles—pretty toys, and handsome nothings. I found the place as crowded now, as when I visited Paris before. M. d'Oberkirch purchased a pair of ruffles, as a present for his mother. These ruffles cost sixty livres.

27*th May.*—I rose very early to go to Versailles. I had not been there since my arrival. I walked about; I perceived the queen walking in the grove d'Apollon, accompanied by Madame de Polignac, the princess royal, and a single footman. She did me the honour of recognizing me, and made me a most friendly salute. The queen had become fat, and was more beautiful than ever. The princess royal had grown very tall.

I dined at Montreuil, with Madame de Mackan. It gave me much pleasure to meet her. I brought her a letter from Madame de Dietrich, *née* de Glaubitz, who had been at Paris the preceding year, and to whom Madame de Mackan had been most attentive and polite. She was delighted to meet an Alsatian lady. They are rare at court. Indeed, I know few women of our good country who have been to Paris.

I met, at Madame de Mackan's, Madame de Villefort, who had been appointed sub-governess the year before. I found the duchess de Beuvron there; she had been presented in the winter, and inaugurated as duchess: she was accompanied by the marquis de Harcourt-Beuvron, who has the privilege of entrée.

Our little group was very agreeable. I was requested to relate the remainder of my journey to Holland and Germany. Madame de Mackan took an especial interest in the relation. She thought the grand-duchess adorable. The entire company made a promenade; we afterwards played *au trent.* It is a game that I did not understand; it is played by three persons. I looked on and endeavoured to learn; it is rather difficult. The marquis de Harcourt won all the time; he played well, and was lucky. I lost this evening the clasp of my bracelet; it was mock diamond. The loss of this trinket, which possessed no intrinsic value, annoyed M. de Oberkirch very seriously. It was an heirloom in his family, and he also esteemed it on account of the elegance of the workmanship. We were obliged to console ourselves, and returned the same evening to Paris, bringing with us M. and Madame de Mackan, who had asked to come in our carriage. We were happy to do them this little service. They returned the next day to Versailles. Places at court are very agreeable, but impose a good deal of subjection.

It is now the fashion to dine at three o'clock, and the time for dinner is very short, of which the gastronomists and cooks complain sorely. It seems as though the folk now-a-days eat only for the sake of nutriment, and wish when they have satisfied their appetites to fly from table. The old people say that such conduct is not dignified. The cooks are in open rebellion.

" People swallow," said the cook of the duchess de la Vallière, " they no longer taste. I am dishonoured !"

Hitherto there has been no valet ; but time effects many changes.

Ten is the hour for supper, and the rapidity of execution at this meal is not less than at dinner. The repast is not now announced to the lady of the house. When dinner is ready the butler appears, and the lady rises. The age of gourmandise is past; but our tables are not less elegantly laid. The luxury of the present day is alarming. The men have scarcely time to eat and drink :

some of them have essayed to be very engaging, very gay, even gallant, hoping to detain the ladies longer, endeavouring possibly by these means to secure themselves a little time for digestion. I know one gentleman who commenced a very interesting story after the first course, interrupting himself every moment breaking off his narrative by questions, replies, *jeux de mots*, and various other artifices, hoping thus to make it last a considerable time. He succeeded in prolonging his history and keeping the attention of his auditors awake until after the fruit appeared, and his appetite had been fully satisfied. He practised this manœuvre every evening, and always succeeded.

The prince de Condé did not wish that his suppers should be abridged; he took care to place beside each lady the gentleman who was agreeable to her, or who was capable of becoming so.

"How do you manage, monseigneur, with the prudes?" asked a person to whom he was giving his receipt.

"Oh, as to them, I let them choose. I would be afraid of making a mistake, and awakening their remembrances instead of exciting their hopes."

Happily there were not many prudes at court.

CHAPTER XI.

Parisian fashions—Mdlle. Bertin and M. Sick—The galleries of the Palais Royal—Epigram on the duke de Chartres—The three branches of the royal family—The Danaïdes—Mdlle. Guimard — Verses — Concert at the count d'Albaret's—The public amuser—He mimics Voltaire—Scene—Madame de Montesson—Madame de Genlis—Madame Mara and Madame Todi — Baulard — Mdlle. Dugazon — Petit Bourg — Walk with the duchess of Bourbon — The duke de Chartres — Confidence—The witchcraft of the regent—The count of Modena and the devil—The Autichamp family—Champrosay—Weakness of the duke of Orleans—Kiss—M. Duperron—Marquis of Brunoy—Licentious plays—Return to Paris—Misalliances—The deserted wife—The 'grand' and 'petit' Palais Bourbon—Ill-judged waggery at the Tuileries—Scandal set afloat by a gentleman attached to the suite of the count of Artois.

28*th May.*—I HAD not visited Mdlle. Bertin since I came to Paris, though everybody was speaking of her millinery wonders. She was more in vogue than ever. The entire fashionable world were contending for caps of her making. She showed me this day *herself*, which was no slight favour, at least thirty of different styles. There was one in particular, a little Bohemian chapeau, finished in the highest perfection from a pattern given by a Bohemian lady, and about which all the ladies of Paris were in ecstasy. It was turned up with an aigrette of passementerie, like the *Steinkerques* of ancient days, and was altogether an original and bewitching little chapeau. The queen, however, did not patronize it: she said she was no longer young enough for that; giving thus a premature example to superannuated coquettes, who persevere in suppressing the almanacs, forgetting that they cannot suppress their own faces, which are often most eloquent witnesses against them.

The *condescension* of Mdlle. Bertin to me was a tribute offered to the countess du Nord, whose custom she still retained. She had her portrait in her drawing-room beside that of the queen, and other crowned heads, who honoured her with their patronage. The jargon of this demoiselle was very amusing. It was a mixture of haughtiness and meanness that bordered on impertinence if she were not cut short, and that often became insolence, if she were allowed to forget her place. The queen with her accustomed amiability had admitted her to a familiarity that she abused, and which she fancied gave her a right to look down on the rest of the world.

My father had asked me to procure him a pair of good spectacles. To make this purchase, I went to the shop of Sick, the optician in the Palais

Royal. This gentleman, too, assumed an air of laughable importance. He was, as the sign above his door said, 'Fournisseur de l'Académie.'

"Ah," said Beaumarchais, "if poor Sick had put upon his sign 'Fournisseur des quatre-vingts,' it would have inspired us with much more confidence."

The Palais Royal was the subject of general conversation, and the duke de Chartres the object of universal censure. He had stopped the erection of the galleries; some said through want of money, others declared that it was through avarice. The remainder of the arches had been finished in wood; the gardens were enclosed, and one could now make a tour of the entire *à couvert.*

The walk in the Palais Royal, planted with trees, was the most beautiful in the world. The opera-dancers went there at certain hours to display their dress. When the duke de Chartres spoke of cutting down these trees, in order to construct the shops, there was a universal outcry. Puns and epigrams were showered upon him in profusion. Some said that, during his stay in Rome, he had sought to become a member of the Arcadian academy: others published the following malicious verses, which I do not believe to contain a shade of truth. It must be a falsehood, notwithstanding all reports. A Bourbon could not be deficient in courage:—

Why regard with pensive eye
  The ruin amid these oak-trees made?
Victor d'Onessant, we'll fly
  Beneath thy laurels' leafy shade.

In short, the Palais Royal was called the 'palais marchand,' and the duke de Chartres the 'prévôt des marchands.' A caricature appeared, in which he was represented as a rag-gatherer, picking up filth at the corner of a street, with this inscription:—

Je cherche des loques à terre.*

The public rivalled each other in abusing him, but nothing could change the determination of the prince. He ordered the trees to be cut down, and in a few hours the *assassination* was accomplished. It is said, however, that the Parisians lost nothing by it. Indeed, of all the public walks the new garden of the Palais Royal is the most frequented by the court and the citizens. It is the rendezvous of the idle and the curious. I heard the other day that the Place St. Marc, at Venice, was to serve as a model for the buildings; that will be very handsome if the four sides correspond. Many persons stand on the passage to the grand staircase, to see the handsome and elegantly-dressed women who go to visit the pictures of the duke of Orleans.

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* Locataires—lodgers.

This collection was commenced by Gaston, brother to Louis XIII., and continued by Monsieur, brother to Louis XIV., who got a part of the Mazarin gallery; it has received fresh additions every year since. This branch of the royal family is very fond of the arts. The duchess of Bourbon has some very beautiful pictures, once the property of the duke du Maine, and which were transferred to the Palais Royal as exchanges or presents. Whilst showing me these pictures, she repeated an observation of the old maréchal de Richelieu, which she remembered word for word:

"The three branches of the house of Bourbon," said he "have each a dominant taste. The eldest loves hunting, the Orleans love pictures, and the Condés love war."

"And the king Louis XVI.," said somebody, "what does he love?"

"Ah! that is a different thing; he loves the people."

All that was true and very clever, as were all the sayings of this *last of our great nobles;* since his death we have not seen his like.

Madame de Bruce took me in the evening to the opera. It was the second representation of the 'Danaïdes,' a magnificent spectacle as to the scenery and costumes, but detestable as to music and poetry. The ballets are very well brought out, notwithstanding the bad airs to which the dances are performed. Mdlle. Guimard had had the small-pox the preceding year, but, strange to say, it had not injured her beauty. She was lean as a grasshopper; but oh, how graceful! How she contrived to give her long thin arms a rounded appearance, and how she managed to hide the sharp-pointedness of her elbows, nobody could tell. Her judgment and taste in dressing are perfect, and do not give the slightest indication of her mixing in the low society that she is accused of frequenting. It is said that she has lovers in thousands, and though not scrupulously virtuous she is very hard to be pleased. She requires either immense riches, or youth, beauty, and high intellect. She gives with great liberality to the poor; she is constantly aiding the parish funds; and her servants have orders in winter never to close her kitchen-door against a mendicant.

A nobleman represented to her one day, that by this liberality she exposed herself to the danger of allowing all sorts of persons into her house.

"They will rob you," he said.

"That is possible," she replied; "but, count, who knows but that if I broke my leg, or when I shall be old, I may be obliged to knock at the doors of the future disciples of Terpsichore? I give them a good example, not knowing but that I may myself one day profit by it."

These reflections were very profound and very philosophic for such a puss.

The words of the 'Danaïdes' are by the baron de Tochudy and M. de Rollet; the music by the Sieur Salieri, the emperor's chief musician at the court of Vienna. There are few good verses in the piece, very few indeed; on the whole it is tiresome as a 'De profundis.' The poem excites no interest, the history of these fifty young ladies being perfectly well known. It was wonderful to see the number of persons who were present at the performance; the splendour of the dresses and the glitter of all around. The ballet was by M. Gardel. This piece it was that attracted the crowd; it divided the public admiration with the 'Marriage of Figaro.' This demonstration of the public taste excited the following epigram:—

> These two new toys Parisian hearts have thrilled,
> And sober ears with deafening plaudits filled;
> Vainly for me the scenic world invites,
> My pity one, the other scorn excites.

I never fail to quote verses when they indicate the taste or spirit of the epoch that I paint. One of the most decided characteristics of the present time, is the rage for rhyming, in spite of everything, and about everything. It was always so with the French, but I think that the distemper is increasing.

29th May.—I had been invited to a morning concert at the count d'Albaret's. He is a rich Piedmontese who has musicians in his own pay, who live in his house and do not go out, without his permission. He is passionately fond of music. He has a large hall for the use of his musicians, where they practise all day. For this reason his concerts are admirable; they are reputed the best in Paris. That is easily understood, a perfect harmony must exist between musicians who always practise together.

M. d'Albaret possesses a great deal of talent, and writes very pretty verses. He is a virtuoso in all the arts. He is the intimate friend of Madame de la Massais, and of Madame de la Reynière. The society at his house is always very select. His house is justly considered the gayest, and perhaps the most amusing in Paris. To make it such was the business of his life—he has no thought but that. He is one of those persons who may be called *public amusers.* Kind and generous, with his purse ever open to the unfortunate, especially to poor artists; he is a real Mæcenas. He is a most amiable-mannered man, and very hospitable. He seeks only talent and intelligence, and is ready to make every sacrifice for the pleasure or amusement of his guests.

He has been often at Ferney, and has many opportunities of seeing Voltaire, whom he imitates to the very life. When the greater number of the company had departed, and a few confidential friends alone remained, he went through a very droll little scene. He has composed many proverbs, in which he introduced 'la grand homme.' Everybody says that his imitations are so perfect, that one may fancy that it was M. de Voltaire himself who performed the part. He acted the part of Voltaire in a passion, much inclined to throw his valet-de-chambre out of the window, because a schoolmaster, a friend of Rousseau's, had been admitted into the drawing-room. M. de Voltaire said that he was a Savoyard curate, although he had a wife and four children. M. d'Albaret had been present at this outburst of rage, and imitated the chief actor to perfection. The costume was copied to the life. He broke, and that in good earnest, snuff-boxes and porcelain plates, and tore up pasteboard, as the illustrious old man had done.

"Thou brute!—thrice brute!—Goth!—numskull!—dost thou not see that this child-whipper is come here to brave me?"

"I will turn him out, monsieur."

"No, thou wretch, he would say that I fear him

—that I fear his master and his thin-spun stories: I do not wish that."

"Then I shall beg him to wait, monsieur."

"Still worse, thou animal! To await me! Do I wish to see him? Do I wish that he should stare at my pictures, my mirrors? A beast, a pedant, from that prince of pedants, Rousseau! Oh! you deserve a drubbing."

And he broke, with his cane, more than a dozen plates.

"Shall I call Madame Denis, monsieur?"

"Madame Denis, Madame Denis!—call my niece to a priestling! Thou art becoming more stupid than thy father, and I did not think that possible."

"But, monsieur, he is not a priest, he has a wife."

"She is ugly!"

"They are married, lawfully married, I know it well."

"She is ugly!"

"They have four children, one has been for some time helping at M. Rousseau's."

"She is ugly!—she is ugly, I tell you! Do not tell me another word about this brood of apes, or I will knock you down."

Here a snuff-box is torn in pieces with tooth and nail.

"Well, monsieur, if you wish, I will go to keep the *magister* company."

The anger of M. de Voltaire rose to a degree that became madness; he stamped, shrieked, broke everything around.

"You!—you to keep company with the devil's curate! I am asked for, and you are to appear! Do you suppose that you will be mistaken for me? Is there a resemblance between us? Could you even say go to the d—— in French? Do you know Latin as he does? Ah! you to present yourself! Give me my wig and cane, and I will go myself; yes, I will go, I will go to fleece him! I will go to give him a lesson—the lesson of Voltaire to Rousseau, and it shall be no trifle!"

He goes off in a fury, lifting his cane, and raising his voice still higher. His eyes suddenly turn towards a window; he stops short and assumes a pastoral air.

"My heifer—my white heifer and her calf! She is getting better! Ah, what a pleasure! Run, fetch me some bread, I will take it to her, and then come back."

After this eclogue, he folds his hands and pronounces a blessing: M. de Voltaire is fond of giving a blessing. He goes down to the meadow, strokes the heifer, embraces the calf, and looks round upon his flocks. All this is related to us by the personage who remains *en scène;* he counts them, talks with the shepherd, and forgets completely, or at least seems to forget, the schoolmaster. The poor wretch has waited the entire day; his patience is exhausted; he is dying of hunger; and in the evening, when the great Voltaire had numbered, first, his heifers, then his sheep, then his blades of grass, he suddenly exclaims:

"Ah, the Savoyard curate!—*ma foi!*—he must sleep at the farm, and to-morrow we shall dispute."

He was master of every species of finesse, which he hid sometimes under the appearance of anger, sometimes of good nature. His wondrous genius enabled him, on emergencies, to assume the appearance of qualities that he did not possess, and he could be tender and devout, and charitable, when such a character suited his purpose. But to see M. Albaret's imitation of M. de Voltaire!—it was a living portrait, it was a mirror in which he seemed to be reflected. I have seen persons sit motionless in astonishment, so perfect was the imitation.

M. d'Albaret often took a part in theatrical pieces with Mesdames de Montesson and de Genlis: he was the friend of both, which was strange, considering the cordial hatred they entertained for one another. When I say he was their friend, I mean that he was an acquaintance of both, but he did not like them; and I have heard that he gave very striking descriptions of each, and not at all flattering. Madame de Montesson had the airs of an upstart commoner, and they seemed as natural to her as her mother's milk. "She sweated pride," said la Harpe, and he ought to be a judge of the sentiment. Her life was a continued scene of domestic acting, of which the object was to seduce that poor duke of Orleans. She got up scenes, of which the parts had been rehearsed beforehand, but he did not see through the artifice. "She revels on beds of roses and in ermined robes, with slipshod heels and cotton stockings," said, one day, the duchess of Bourbon, to whom the mention of her stepmother caused a nausea. It was she who most strongly resisted the idea of her draping her carriage on the death of the first prince of the blood. She went to the king, and boldly revealed to him what the duke de Chartres would have concealed. The king ordered that the duchess of Orleans *in partibus* ("alas!" said the duchess of Bourbon, "we can no longer add *infidelium*, as she is well married")—that Madame de Montesson, in short, should enter into the convent of the Assumption, where, in its strict enclosure, she may assume her queenly airs for her own private amusement. I am anticipating events, but all this escaped my pen as it ran rapidly through my thoughts. The vanity of Madame de Genlis, "the tutor," showed itself in a different fashion. I do not wish to enter into particulars. I did not like her, spite of her accomplishments and the charm of her conversation; she was too systematic: she is a woman who has laid aside the flowing robes of her sex for the culottes of a pedagogue. Besides, nothing about her is natural. She is constantly in an attitude, as it were, thinking that her portrait, moral or physical, is being taken. She attaches too much importance to her celebrity—she thinks too much of her own opinions. One of the great follies of this masculine woman is her harp; she carries it about with her. She speaks of it when it is not near—she plays upon a crust of bread, and practises with a piece of packthread. When she perceives that anybody is looking at her, she rounds her arm, pinches up her mouth, assumes a sentimental look and attitude, and begins to move her fingers. What a charming quality is simplicity of character!

It was expected that Madame Mara would have performed at M. d'Albaret's concert, but she fell ill and could not come. She had been at Paris the preceding year, as well as Madame Todi, she whom I had heard at Stuttgard, and who is now in Russia. They were rivals, both in popularity and talent, in sacred concerts. A comparison was, of course, made in rhyme, which I will not omit:

Todi's soft and touching tone
  Moves my heart to tender sighs;
Mara's brilliant notes alone
  Waft my spirit to the skies.
Both with wizard power are blest,
  O'er the soul such rapture flinging.
Ask me which I like the best,
  I answer, "She that's singing."

The passion for verse-making will not spare anything.

After M. d'Albaret's concert I went to Baulard's, the milliner. Alexandrine and he were formerly the two most celebrated, but Mdlle. Bertin has dethroned both. She came from her Quai de Gèvres, where she was so long in obscurity, triumphed over her rivals, and forced both to take a second rank. Baulard's taste in mantles and trimming is, however, still very much in fashion. He detained me a whole hour declaiming and protesting against Mdlle. Bertin, who assumed the airs of a duchess, and who was not even a bourgeoise. I succeeded in escaping from his confidential communications, which, indeed, were offered to every new-comer, and went to the Italian Opera, where 'Aucassin and Nicolette' was performed. The words are by Sedaine, the music by Grétry. Mdlle. Dugazon appeared in the character of Nicolette. Oh! what an enchanting—what a delightful creature! I could not describe the pleasure I experienced in beholding her performance. What grace! What talents! What artistic perfection! She always brings crowded houses, and excites the most deafening applause.

The plot is founded on an old fable, and retains the *naïveté* of its origin, whilst it breathes the peculiar style of Sedaine. This piece is still very much in fashion, though no longer new. But what would not Mdlle. Dugazon achieve!

I went to pay my respects to the duchess de Chartres, the most esteemed and most estimable of all the princesses, though not the most fortunate. She received me with that amiability of which her father, the duke de Penthièvre, had given the example and precept all his life. The duchess of Bourbon did me the honour of calling to bring me to 'Petit Bourg,' a château that belonged to her, and where we were to pass some days together. I promised myself a great deal of pleasure from this little excursion. I was delighted at having an opportunity of cultivating a closer intimacy with this amiable princess, and I expected to profit largely by her conversation.

'Petit Bourg' is a magnificent abode, and in a charming site, that commands a view of a wide extent of country. It belonged formerly to Madame de Montespan, afterwards to her son the duke d'Antin, who had the honour of frequently receiving Louis XIV. there; and lastly, it had been in the possession of the marquis de Poyanne, major in the carabineers under the duke of Provence. The duchess de Bourbon is very much attached to this residence, and goes there as frequently as she can, and remains as long as possible.

We slept at Petit Bourg. The duchess de Bourbon exercises here a princely hospitality, combined with the *laissez aller* of rural life, such as one may expect to enjoy in the house of a wealthy and generous landed proprietor.

29*th May.*—The duchess de Bourbon sent to awaken me early: I found her equipped for a *promenade à pied.* We went out together without any attendant, quite alone, and she showed me, *con amore,* the most beautiful spots in the park. We talked for a long time in the most confidential manner.

The princess deigned to relate to me the history of her sorrows, her family vexations, the affection she bore her august husband, and which he repaid with so much indifference. She spoke especially of her brother, the duke de Chartres, of whom she had so much cause to complain, and who had acted so strangely towards her.

"I am very fond of my sister-in-law," added she, "she is perfect; but my brother!"

I have already spoken of his conduct in the affair of the duel with the count d'Artois. Not only, as I said, did he not take his sister's part, but he continued to appear in public with the count d'Artois, affecting to be more attached to him than ever, and jesting about the duchess de Bourbon with unparalleled cynicism. His conduct was so much disapproved of in society, that it was said that though the duke de Bourbon and count d'Artois fought, that it was the duke de Chartres who was wounded by the combat. This did not prevent his visiting at the Palais Bourbon: the princess refused to receive him, and the princes of the house of Condé approved her conduct.

The public had, all at once, espoused the quarrel of the duchess de Bourbon, and gave a pretty strong lesson to the count d'Artois, by not cheering him as he passed to the theatre; but much longer was the chastisement inflicted on the duke de Chartres, who during many years after was received, on all public occasions, in profound silence, whilst, on the contrary, wherever the duchess de Bourbon appeared she was hailed with loud applause.

Much may be said about the conduct of the duke de Chartres towards the prince de Lamballes, as well as towards his own wife, that angel on earth, who loved him so passionately and whom he treated so ill. His intimacy with Madame de Genlis was well known to everybody, but she was not the only person who led him astray. I listened with a lively interest to all that concerned the duchess de Bourbon and this prince. I tried to console her, she listened, but did not seem to put much faith in the hopes that I tried to inspire.

"My dear baroness," replied she, "a woman of quality, who is separated from her husband, is already blamed and exposed to a thousand inconveniences, but with a princess it is still worse. Every charm of life is snatched from her—the most innocent pleasures are denied her—the visits of those dearest to her heart are forbidden. Calumny pursues her every step. I tell you that it is a frightful existence; and were it in my power to choose, I would rather inhabit that hovel, and live upon black bread, than lead such a life. I am still young, and have a prospect of long suffering before me."

When we returned to the château, the eyes of the princess were red; she retired to her room, and remained alone for half an hour before dinner.

Our number was small; I was the only stranger; the rest of the company consisted of the persons attached to the suite of the princess, and with whose presence she could not dispense. The day was passed in walking or driving in the park, which is very extensive. We did not leave a spot unvisited. The conversation was delightful. The duchess de Bourbon had recovered her gaiety. She related an anecdote, which, as it is not generally known, I made a note of in the evening, that I may remember it. It was about the regent's celebrated tampering with witchcraft.

The duchess had learned it from her mother, of whom she seldom speaks, and for very good reasons; but the purport of the story was, that after the death of the duke of Orleans, son to the regent (he who was called Orleans St. Geneviève, because he had retired into that community), there was discovered, in the Palais Royal, a hiding-place cut deep in the wall. In this were found strange-looking instruments, books filled with necromantic spells, skeletons of animals, skulls, herbs of every description, and various powders of wonderful, but not destructive qualities. There was found in the same place, a paper in the handwriting of the prince, but containing things so extravagant, that those who made the discovery burned it without communicating its contents to any one. It was reported that on these pages were written cabalistic spells, the formula of oaths, all betraying a passion for the occult sciences, a love of the marvellous, and, above, all, a desire to penetrate the Unknown. The sudden death of the regent was undoubtedly the cause that these things had not been destroyed; it is probable that he would have done so had he had time.

There existed also some very curious letters of this inexplicable prince, who was born with the germ of every noble quality, and into whose heart education had infused every vice. The duchess de Bourbon was fond of speaking of him. There was something in his nature that possessed an attraction for hers. She had inherited his tastes, not for the black art, but for the marvellous; and perhaps, had she lived at the same epoch as he, she would have willingly undertaken the *grand œuvre.*

On this, the first evening of our arrival at Petit Bourg, we remained very late in the garden. Each told a ghost story, and I would venture to say that when we separated, none was quite free from nervous tremors.

Madame de Serent declared that the count de Provence carried on infernal practices with the count of Modena, who procured him a sight of the devil. This devil was a handsome young man, who bore no other mark of his subterranean dwelling than a pair of pretty little horns. He presented Monsieur a large red book, flame-bound, and on its fiery pages the prince had distinctly read that he should one day be king. We involuntarily shuddered as Madame de Serent related this prediction. He was also told that he should see this same devil three times, and that the last time should be a little before his death. The count of Modena, a kind of adept in these things, almost as extraordinary as Cagliostro, related this anecdote as a fact, and declared that he had been present at the scene. As for me, who was not present, I tell the story just as I heard it.

The duchess de Bourbon had an excellent band of musicians, who performed every evening before supper. How pleasant it was to sit beneath the foliage and listen to that invisible orchestra! The princess understands well how to entertain her guests.

31*st May.*—The marquis d'Autichamp called here to-day. He is an Englishman, captain in the gendarmerie, knight of the order of the Holy Ghost, and one of the best cavalry generals in France. He was accompanied by, or rather he accompanied, his nieces.

The marquis d'Autichamp is brother to the count of that name, who displayed such remarkable bravery at the taking of St. Christopher: his eldest son was killed at his side by a cannon-ball. The father was made maréchal-de-camp after this action; but honours could not heal the wounds of his heart.

He had still two sons: one sixteen years of age, and the other, Charles, who is only fourteen, is in the dragoons.

Their other uncle, the viscount d'Autichamp, married a Duplessis-Châtillon. The viscount d'Autichamp-de-Beaumont married Mdlle. de Chaumont de la Galaysière.

The nieces are charming: they remained with us all the time that we stayed at Petit Bourg. The duchess de Bourbon improvisatrised, so to speak, a *bal champêtre.* We danced in the open air beneath the glancing light of a thousand variegated lamps. Our costumes were unpretending; our gems were flowers, but we were not the less gay for that. We supped to the sound of music: some of the airs were new and of delightful melody, the production of an Italian, whose name I have forgotten; he was but little known, and died soon after of disease of the chest.

Before supper we walked to Champ Rosay, where we got excellent cream. The princess was fond of preparing a surprise of this kind. All the peasants of the neighbourhood knew her: she spoke to them familiarly, entered their cottages, and often took a morsel of black bread, or a fresh egg from their tables. This familiarity arose partly from an originality of character, and it, in part, served as a pretext for the exercise of generosity: she was profuse in her gifts.

1*st June.*—The duchess de Chartres passed the entire day at Petit Bourg. This princess bore the stamp of an incurable melancholy: she smiled sometimes, but never laughed. Her separation from her children, carried off by Madame de Genlis, was breaking her heart. She tried to turn her thoughts from her sorrows, but could not succeed. This day, however, she related, with considerable vivacity, how the duke of Orleans had come expressly to St. Assise that morning at seven o'clock, and begged to speak with her. Something for Madame de Montesson must have been in question; and so it was,—she was most anxious to get the pattern of a stomacher of diamonds belonging to the duchess de Chartres, but did not dare to ask it herself. The prince was deputed to act, but he went beyond his orders.

"I will say that you are the best creature in the world if you give me this stomacher. I will get you another,—handsomer, and more costly. The marchioness is impatient: she cannot wait to have one made—it would be too long."

"And, monsieur, you would expect me to wait all that time?"

"Yes, certainly; but you can wear another: that makes no difference to you. You are not excitable and nervous like the marchioness,—you are not accustomed, like her, to follow your whims. Now, you surely will not refuse me—I could make her so happy!"

The duchess de Chartres, to whom the exchange was a matter of indifference, gave the stomacher.

She pitied the poor amorous man, who, in his old age, was domineered over like a child. He furnished a topic of conversation to the court and city.

We visited the gardens of M. Amisson.* Ruperron is very beautiful, very English in its style. There was music in the evening. We beguiled the night in conversation, and it was two in the morning when we entered the house. The duchess de Chartres was not of the party: she had left us long before.

2nd June.—The duchess de Bourbon wished to visit her poor people in the hospital, and we accompanied her. Her charity extends to everything,—she has founded several beds *à perpétuité.* Returning, we breakfasted in the garden with the fruit-gatherers, some of whom were from Petit Bourg. I could not imagine a more peaceful life than that which the princess leads at her château: she is an object of envy to the queen, who often tells her so.

"I am just sufficiently princess to enjoy the honours and prerogatives of the rank, but not enough so to be charged with the responsibilities. Your majesty has Trianon,—I have Petit Bourg: the great difference is, that nobody cares for me, and everybody is thinking of the queen."

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* Father of Madame de Lambert and of M. Amisson, *directeur de l'imprimerie*, who died on the scaffold during the revolution. He left two sons and one daughter, Madame de Lavandine, mother of Madame de Lanéofine-Brèves. Madame de Lambert was mother of the marchioness de Courtarvet. M. de Lambert became general in the Russian service during the emigration.—*Editor's Note.*

The carriages were ordered, and we took a drive to Brunoy, an estate now in the possession of the count de Provence.

The last possessor of this estate was the marquis de Brunoy: he was M. Paris de Montmartel, of the family of Paris-Duvernay, which does not imply that he was of high birth. He had been extravagant in his expenditure on the park, the château, and especially on the church: on these projects he expended ten millions. It is almost incredible, but it is true. His arrangements for the procession on Corpus Christi exceeded anything that kings had ever seen: it cost twenty-four thousand livres. This man ought certainly to have been put into the lunatic asylum. The archbishop of Paris thought this luxury misplaced, and when Monsieur became proprietor he authorized the sale of all these things. The count de Provence gave the money arising from this sale to the poor, and to benevolent institutions,—a proceeding that was very much commended.

The licentious and indecorous plays that were performed here some years since were universally condemned. The king was weak enough to go there to please his brother; but he bitterly repented it,—nobody could form an idea of the licence that prevailed. Two ladies appeared in the assembly, but they were soon obliged to retire. The originators of these entertainments had dared to invite the queen, but she refused positively. She did more,—she appeared on these days in public in Paris, in order to prove that she had not accepted the invitation. It is said that Madame de Montesson appeared there once, when the performances were of a more respectable character: but that makes little difference,—I do not understand how she could so far forget herself.

The marquis de Brunoy was married to Mdlle. d'Escars.

Orders had been given by Monsieur for the reception of the duchess de Bourbon, if she should chance to come. An elegant collation was prepared; we did not touch it, at least we did not sit to table. Monsieur seldom came there, excepting on public occasions, and Madame never appeared. The count de Provence kept a bachelor's court there, and that not one of the most moral. The prince is, nevertheless, reasonable, or rather a reasoner. He has talent and information, but is not much liked.*

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* Talma had a house at Brunoy, and distributed large alms to the poor of the neighbourhood. Louis XVIII.

3rd June.—The duchess de Bourbon received a letter that recalled her to Paris. She sent for me in the morning, and told me with regret that our trip should be abridged, as she was obliged to return to Paris on account of some business matters. The eyes of the princess were red. I do not know what the letter contained, but I feared that she had met some annoyance. Respect induced me to keep silence. Never was a woman more severely or more unjustly judged: she still loves her husband tenderly, though he has been to her the cause of the deepest sorrow. She has been accused of love intrigues: I have never seen a trace of anything of the kind. In any case, there was more of indiscretion than bad intention in her conduct. If she sometimes overstepped an established social rule, it was to endeavour to forget, in the excitement of change, the griefs that oppressed her. It is probable that by these means she hoped to tear from her heart the poisoned arrow that rankled there. Not finding within her sufficient resolution or sufficient virtue to throw herself into the arms of religion for consolation, she sought to dissipate the sense of suffering in the whirl of fashionable life.

" I am like a squirrel in a revolving cage," said

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created the duke of Wellington duke of Brunoy.—*Editor's Note.*

she; "he turns, and turns, and thinks that he has advanced, whilst he is still in the same place."

What made me in this case suspect that the princess was labouring under a painful secret—mark, I do not say criminal—were the delays that her serene highness evidently sought to make on her way to Paris. She visited successively Bicêtre, la Salpêtrière, the Gobelins. That she was trying to gain time was evident to everybody; a disagreeable duty or painful proceeding of some kind awaited her. At Bicêtre she talked for a long time with an old man, a kind of King Lear, who complained bitterly of his daughters. She gave him some money, and finished the conversation by asking,

"Have you done your children no wrong? Look into your conscience."

"No, madame, they could not reproach me with anything except having married my servant-maid."

"And is not that enough?" replied she, impatiently, "you need not say more."

At the Salpêtrière she was shown a poor woman, whom the desertion of her husband had deprived of reason. She remained squatted in a corner, with a little image in her hand: she must have suffered dreadfully. The duchess de Bourbon stood gazing on her for more than a quarter of an hour: she made no remark, not even a word, but became sad and thoughtful. She dismissed us at the entrance to her mansion, but without one of her usual graceful expressions, that are the offspring of feeling and talent. This mute drama pierced my heart. At the Italian Opera, on that evening, I was wholly unconscious of what was going on around me; I neither saw nor heard. I could think only of the poor princess.

4th June.—After a visit to Madame Dietrich, I went again to Baulard's to purchase a mantle. He was more discreet this time: I succeeded in fixing his attention exclusively on his goods. He sold me the prettiest little mantle in the world; and no sooner had the duchess de Bourbon seen it, than she wished for a similar. I visited the grand and petit Palais Bourbon, but without the princess, as may be supposed. She asked me many questions when we met. The little Palais Bourbon is attached to the great, and completes it: it is a perfect gem. The prince de Condé has made it the most charming architectural trifle in the world. It is furnished with taste and elegance, but not perhaps with sufficient magnificence, considering who its inmates are. There were whims and fancies displayed there, as well as in the house of Mdlle. Dervrieux. The apartments of Mdlle. de Condé were arranged with majestic simplicity. There was in her room a crucifixion, by Titian, I believe; it was the most touching representation of the Man of God that I have ever seen.

Besides the great and the little, there is also the medium palace, which renders the entire one dwelling as extensive as elegant. I saw there a suite of pictures representing the battles in which the great Condé had distinguished himself: there were also many pictures of hunts.

We were received by the household of his serene highness with a politeness that one does not always experience in such cases. It was the work of the masters; Mdlle. Condé gave the most strict orders in this respect. I thought often of the princess during this visit, and I perceived with pleasure that the prince de Condé had her portrait in his chamber. The duke de Bourbon had in his apartment only pictures of dogs, horses, and the portraits of some of his ancestors; no women, excepting a portrait of the duchess, daughter of Louis XIV., and Madame de Montespan. Oh, what a sweet, saucy face!

The gardens of the Tuileries were filled with promenaders. For some time past certain persons, through a misplaced spirit of waggery, were in the habit of going there in such very strange costumes, that the Swiss guards were often obliged to expel those, the oddity of whose dress may cause disagreeable scenes. These persons, probably to revenge the offence offered them, appeared now in troops, wearing emblematic costumes, and bearing labels, criticising the court, the financiers, the citizens, and the clergy. The gates were instantly closed, and these impertinent censors arrested on the spot and sent to the châtelet, where they had time to reflect at leisure on the disagreeable consequences of a pantomimic satire.

There was great commotion excited at that time by a piece of court-scandal, and which increased in magnitude as it passed from mouth to mouth. The count d'Artois had a gentleman in waiting, named Desgranges. He was a man of low birth, and very much out of place in the household of his majesty's brother. His beauty was so striking that it became a proverb and standard of comparison. This beauty had, probably, helped his advancement. However this may be, he succeeded, notwithstanding his low extraction, in getting a post in the Artois guards. He possessed intelligence, a talent for intrigue, great bravery, and a determination to succeed at any cost. One day, as he was escorting the carriage of their royal highnesses, the horses took fright, and ran straight towards the pont de Sèvres, which was then undergoing some repairs. The princes would certainly have been thrown into the river: Desgranges sprang forward, and at the risk of being crushed to death, turned with all his strength, which is herculean, one of the fore horses, thus changing the direction of all. The count and countess d'Artois expressed the most lively thanks to M. Desgranges, to whom they were indebted for the preservation of their lives. He was immediately appointed captain in the cuirassiers. A short time after the count d'Artois made him his gentleman in waiting. This was high fortune for a man like him, sufficient, one would think, to satisfy his ambition ; but he was far from being satisfied.

He had the baseness to calumniate his benefactress. The countess d'Artois took an interest in him as one who had saved her life, and that of her husband. She bestowed many favours on him. Pure and virtuous, like all her family, she thought not of calumny. But this Desgranges, a garrison fop, dared to boast of having won the good graces of his patroness, and spoke of rendezvous, and showed forged letters, and at length went so far as to put infamous reports in circulation about a princess, whose rank and conduct ought to have placed her far above the reach of such as he.

The count d'Artois was informed of these reports. He went to the king : Desgranges was arrested, interrogated, and ordered to produce proofs of his assertions. He became alarmed, retracted all he had said, and apologized on his knees. The countess d'Artois was very much vexed at this adventure and at all the reports that resulted from it. No person, however, not even the most vicious or the most ill inclined, thought of accusing her. She was loudly welcomed at the opera the first time she appeared there after this affair. Everybody knows how devoted this princess is to her duties, and how tenderly she is attached to her husband. For once calumny, which so seldom spares princes, has not been listened to.

CHAPTER XII.

Marchioness de Persan—Nouvelle à la main—Countess de Bosé—I go to Versailles with the duchess de Bourbon—Storm—Choiseul drawing-room—Marshal Biron—'Atys'—Marchioness de Larochelambert—Countess de Balbi—Baroness de Beseuval—Remark—Count de Melfort—King of Sweden visits the duchess de Bourbon—Anecdote of his presentation to Louis XVI.—Viscount Balincourt—Madame de Houdetot's verses on the duchess de la Vallière—Duchess de Bourbon adores the blessed sacrament—The 'Beau Boulevard'—Mesmer—Martinez Pascalis—Saint Martin—Animal magnetism—Vestris—Mdlle. St. Hubertin—Fontainebleau—The eve of the presentation—The "*honours*"—Testimonials—Decision of the king—Exceptions to the required testimonials—Testimonials necessary for taking one's seat in the royal carriages—The honours of the Louvre—The 'Tabouret'—The right of putting on royal mourning—Marshal de Castries—M. de Breteuil—My presentation—The queen's game—Duchess de Guiche—Countess d'Ossun—Viscountess de Polastron—Countess de Chalons—Ladies presented in 1784—Princess de Lamballes—Pleasantry of the count d'Artois—The fan—Armida—Bagatelle—Baron Zuckmantel—Singular distraction—M. de la Galisière—Abbé Moselles.

7th June.—I WENT to visit the marchioness de Persan, whose family is the fountain-head of all the news of the day. Madame de Persan (Doubles de Persan) was Mdlle. de Hargemont. The marquis de Persan is an officer in the king's regiment, and he has been first *maréchal des logis* to the count d'Artois. His uncle, the count de Persan, is field-marshal, and has been colonel-general of a regiment. He distinguished himself at the battle of Fontenoy, and assisted at the taking of Minorca. He is a very worthy man, and very much esteemed. He has a son nine years of age, and heir to all his glory.

Madame Doubles (wife of the President Doubles), a lady of this same family, is very fond of assembling at her house all the *beaux-esprits* of Paris, who compose and write there, and from thence originate all the *nouvelles de main* that circulate through the metropolis.* The society that one meets at this house is peculiar, and very different from that which I generally see. The Marais, where this lady resides, is no longer fashionable—it is only inhabited by the magistracy, and a few nobility of the ancient court; but one may feel great interest in a visit to this quarter, where the modern ideas and the strange notions of the present day have not yet penetrated.

I owed a visit to the countess de Bose, which I was anxious to pay before going to Versailles with the duchess de Bourbon. This family of Bose (pronounced Bosé) is attached to the court at Wurtemberg; one M. de Bose is grand huntsman to the duke, and another is in the Wurtembergian army. They were now for a short time in Paris, and I saw them very often, particularly in my journey in the year '86, as I will have occasion to mention. They were quite German in their ceremonious manners, which contrasted rather disagreeably with the easy politeness to which I was accustomed, and I felt their society rather wearisome at that time; but they are much improved since, or perhaps I am become accustomed to them.

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* M. de Persan, of this same family, was married to Mdlle. d'Esclignac, daughter to the duke d'Esclignac (formerly duke of Fimarçon), and of Mdlle. de Perigon.—*Editor's Note.*

The duchess de Bourbon took me to Versailles. We went *tête-à-tête* in her carriage, for which she had expressly permitted her ladies to remain at home. She was incognito, as she only went for an affair of business. She did not see either the king or queen, and even desired that they should not be informed of her visit. We returned the same day. We conversed a good deal on our route, and the duchess confided many things to me, which still more increased my respectful devotion to her. She had the goodness to take me to my own house. The heat was dreadful, sufficient to make one ill; and I envied the duchess her beautiful gardens, where she would walk, I knew, for a great part of the night.

6th June.—The excessive heat of the evening was succeeded by a tempest, the greatest I ever witnessed, even amongst our mountains. The thunder, rain, and wind were so violent, that it was feared that the houses would fall. It was impossible to go out, but we were greatly amused by the people trying to cross the flood that overflowed the streets. Women were carried in arms, some in baskets, and some harangued the crowd if they delayed in laying planks for them. I never saw such confusion. In the evening we were able to go to the Palais Royal to sup.

7th June.—I spent the entire day in the royal gardens at Nôtre Dame, where I went to see the tomb of M. d'Harcourt, which was at that time attracting great crowds. I cannot say much for it, as it did not inspire me with any great admiration. I went to the Italian Opera, where I had promised to meet Madame de Bose. This was a new theatre, built on the site of the Hôtel de Choiseul, near the boulevards of the Rue Richelieu. The theatre does not open on this boulevard, as one would naturally expect, because the actors had required that a house should be built for their especial use, to which the proprietors had the weakness to consent. This has destroyed the building, of which the façade would have been a great addition to the boulevard

The curtain rises here in the same manner as at the ancient opera, and they have preserved the old motto of '*castigat ridendo more*,' which was written by the poet Sauteuil. The ceiling represents Apollo in the midst of the Muses.

When the duke de Choiseul was selling the ground, he made it a condition that he and his posterity should for ever have a free box in the house, to whatever species of dramatic representation it may be turned hereafter.

The performance this evening was 'Mélomanie,' a comic opera, that had not been very successful at its first appearance three years before, but has been since very much improved. The music is delightful. It was composed by M. Champein, and dedicated to Mdlle. de Condé.

After 'Mélomanie' we had 'L'Amoureux de Quinze Ans,' which had been composed by M. Laujeon in honour of the marriage of M. de Meulan d'Ablois and Mdlle. Duplessin. He altered it afterwards for the marriage of the duke and duchess de Bourbon, which turned out so unfortunately. It is now the property of the Italian theatre, where it ranks among the comic operas. The audience this evening was very numerous.

8th June.—I went to the Opera with that good and illustrious old man, Marshal Biron. He was at that time eighty years of age, and has since died (in 1788), to my great regret. He had a beautiful house and garden near the barrier of the Rue de Varennes. His son, the duke de Lauzun, is married to Mdlle. de Rochefoucauld.

The opera was 'Atys;' the words, which are very generally known, are by M. de Pinault, and the music by Piccini. It was restored to the stage in 1783, since when its success has been every day increasing. The music of the recitative is simple, the chorus of angels admirable, and the songs equally agreeable from their variety and melody. Mdlle. Hubertin played Sangaride with inimitable talent. There is a brilliancy and a sensibility in her acting, which quite eclipsed Mdlle. Laguerre, who owed her success more to her charms as a woman than an actress. Her audience was in a great measure composed of past, present, or future lovers.

9th June.—I went to visit the princess de Chinay, *née* Fitz-James, one of the queen's *dames-du-palais*, with whom I found a great number of our most charming ladies. Her drawing-room was like an aviary, filled with the delicious warbling of the most beautiful birds. The marchioness de Rochefoucauld (Mdlle. de Preux-Brèze) had a delightful voice, and sang with great taste: she often sings with the queen. There was also the countess d'Andlau, daughter of M. Helvetius, who is one of her majesty's intimate friends, and whose house is frequented by the most agreeable and intellectual society in Paris; and another lady, who was the subject of many discussions as to whether she should be admitted into society or not, and who was censured by some, and excused by others, with a great deal of warmth. It was said that she was not intimate with the princess de Chinay; but I can only say that I saw her in her house, where she appeared to feel quite at ease. This lady was the countess de Balbi, *née* de Cassmont, who was married to a Genoese, colonel *à la suite* of the Bourbon regiment, and from whom she was separated after some disagreeable rumours, that I would not wish to repeat. She made a great noise in the world from the years 1778 to 1780, and has the reputation of being in high favour with the count de Provence. The countess de Provence has also great friendship for this lady, but to what extent I cannot say. She had promised her the reversion of the charge of *dame d'atours*, which was filled by the duchess de Lesparre.

The duchess was indignant; and requested, and even conjured, the countess de Provence not to associate her with this person, but in vain; 'Madame' was determined, and the duchess de Lesparre had no alternative but to send in her resignation, which was accepted, and the office at once given to Madame de Balbi. The queen did what she could to prevent this, without disturbing her sister-in-law's peace of mind; but it was useless—' Madame' was entirely under the influence of her favourite.

This countess de Balbi is not what one could call a crafty woman, but owes her influence rather to her agreeable manners. She is not handsome, but graceful, witty, and frivolous. Her gaiety is inexhaustible, and makes her society delightful to any person not over scrupulous. She is liked by many persons, and admired for her elegance and good taste. Her house is filled with quantities of wondrous ornaments; and is a model of the *genre* 'babiole' (knick-knack), which was so fashionable during the reign of the late king. One would not feel weary of admiring its fantastic treasures from morning until night.

This lady has one defect, which has a very disagreeable influence both on her temper and appearance; and that is, an insatiable passion for gambling. The count de Provence amuses himself a good deal at what he calls her 'Bacchanales;' and when she loses, he is the only person that dares attempt to restrain her anger.

Near Madame de Balbi sat the baron de Bezenval, lieutenant-colonel of the Swiss guards, and who was one of the remarkable men of the day. He had the reputation of having great influence with the queen—an influence that is justified by his unusually good disposition, and his graceful though uncultivated mind. He is not by any means a man of information, having had always a great disinclination to study; but he is shrewd, diplomatic, understands what is passing around, and can tell a story better than any person I know. I once heard a very good remark that he made about a fellow-countryman of his, Baron Zurlander, colonel of the Zurlander regiment.

The princess de Chinay praised this gentleman more than M. de Bezenval considered he deserved, and he said so.

"But at least," said she, "you will allow that he is very learned."

"Oh! that is quite true, madame," replied he; "he is a great library, with a fool for librarian."

"Baron," said the count de Melfort, "I defy any person to say the same of you."

"They cannot, for I know nothing," said M. de Bezenval; who, however, did not like allusions to his ignorance.

This count de Melfort is of an illustrious Scotch family, and grandson of John Drummond, count of Perth—who was minister to James II., who created him duke of Melfort; and Louis XIV. made him a peer of France—and grand-nephew to James Drummond, chancellor of Scotland, and who followed James II. to St. Germain. The English king made James Drummond duke of Perth, and appointed him governor to his son the chevalier St. George. He was also a peer of France.

This count de Melfort was colonel of the Orleans regiment, and afterwards lieutenant-general. In his youth he had been one of the most brilliant and seductive men at court; and the list of his "conquests" was much longer than that of his victories, as the duchess de Bourbon told me, but in the greatest secrecy, as he had the reputation of being a lover of her own mother's, the duchess of Orleans, *née* Louisa Henrietta de Bourbon-Conti. She was a woman of most dissolute life; and dishonoured, in a most melancholy manner, the distinguished name she bore. Public report ascribed the paternity of her son, the duke de Chartres, to M. de Melfort; and, if that be true, he has bestowed a sad gift upon this country.

It was said of the duke of Orleans, that he had transformed himself into a M—— de Montesson, as he could not transform Madame de Montesson into a duchess of Orleans.

M. de Melfort was married to Mdlle. de Laporte, sister to the governor of Lorraine, and is first cousin to the duke de Melfort, who has inherited from both branches. I spent this morning very agreeably; for, after a walk to the Tivoli of M. Boutin, I went to visit the duchess de Bourbon; with whom I had the honour of finding Gustavus III., king of Sweden, who was travelling under the name of Count Haga. He had been then a few days at Paris, and intended remaining some weeks. He was a most charming prince, and had been very well received both at Paris and Versailles. This was his first visit to the duchess. His marked and severe physiognomy seemed impressed with an expression of fatality: he was said to believe in the occult sciences; and I myself have heard him say that he had, at Stockholm, a prophetess in whom he had the most unbounded confidence, and whom he constantly consulted, always assuming a new disguise. But change his appearance as he would, her answer was always the same,—that he would die young, and by a violent death. A death to which northern monarchs are subject.

At his first visit, he did not speak to us of these mournful things, but of how delighted he was with Paris; and of the surprise he gave his ambassador, whom he found ill, and not at all prepared for his reception: all of which he told with the greatest gaiety and good taste.

He had also gone quite unexpectedly to court: the king was gone to Rambouillet to hunt, and the queen sent, in haste, to inform him of the arrival of the Swedish monarch. His majesty was so anxious to return, that he came without his suite, but found his haste almost useless, as all the valets were out, and had taken the keys with them, and no person knew where to get anything. But the count of Haga was with the queen; and the king's kindness of disposition making him anxious to join them, he performed his toilet, assisted by some persons attached to the court. But these, either in confusion or ignorance, did the strangest things with his dress, without his perceiving it. One of his shoe-buckles was white, and the other gold; his vest was velvet, though it was July, and all his insignia were turned wrong. His head was powdered properly, but on one side; and the knot of his sword would not hold. The queen immediately remarked the defects of his majesty's dress, and was very much annoyed; but he only laughed, and made the count of Haga laugh. Gustavus was struck by the goodness and serenity of our monarch's mind, and said,

"Louis XVI. is one of the best and most benevolent men in existence; and I feel the greatest admiration for the calm and peace of soul that breathe in all he says and does."

The king of Sweden went the same evening to see the 'Marriage of Figaro,' but did not arrive until the first act had been entirely finished. The audience received him with loud cheers, and insisted that the opera should be recommenced for his especial pleasure. The king thanked them with the greatest politeness, and the orchestra immediately struck up the overture.

I told before, I think, that from the duchess of Bourbon's I went to M. Boutin; but I do not think I told that Mdlle. Boutin has since been married to the viscount de Balincourt, captain in the Bourbon regiment.

My next visit was to the duchess de la Vallière's, where I found a number of intellectual and amiable persons, and where we had the most varied and agreeable conversation. Amongst the rest I remarked a very interesting young lady, whose name I forget, but who was niece to Madame de Houleton. She told me of an impromptu, composed by her aunt, which had been very much admired, and which I think very pretty. Its subject was the beauty of Madame de la Vallière, who, though fifty years of age, was exceedingly handsome:—

Nature, wise and prudent ever,
  Makes old Time his wish restrain,
And spare thy charms, for she never
  Such a face could mould again.

This, which would be flattery if said of another, was not so when applied to Madame de la Vallière.

This lady was as good as she was beautiful, and had the kindness to offer to chaperon me at my presentation. In seeing her in the centre of a circle of beautiful women, outshining them all, one would feel inclined to say—What must she have been when she was young?

10*th June.*—I went with the duchess de Bourbon to the hôtel Mazarin, to see the procession of St. Sulpice. It was very fine, and the entire hôtel was hung with *pavaisie.* The duchess went down into the street to adore the blessed sacrament, and kiss the paten, which the descendants of St. Louis had the privilege of kissing on the same side as the priest. I had the honour of dining with her grace, and afterwards accompanying her in a visit to the king of Sweden. We admired him still more than on the day before; his information was deep and varied, and he expressed the greatest interest in the welfare of his subjects, a sentiment that is as praiseworthy as it is rare. The ladies he visited oftenest during his stay at Paris were the princess de Croix, the duchess de la Vallière, the countess de la Marck, and Madame de Boufflers, which proves his admiration for the charms of wit and intelligence.

We went to the *beau boulevard,* that is the boulevard du Temple, where there was great gaiety and animation. We looked at everything, the fantoccini that were brought from Italy, the wax figures, &c.; we did not miss a single thing worth seeing. It is on this boulevard that is exhibited 'Fanchon la Vielleuse,' which was then so fashionable, and which has made so much money by its songs, monkey, and old woman. Who has not heard of Fanchon? It has been the subject of a thousand ballads.

11*th June.*—We visited Mesmer, the father and head of magnetism. I had known him in Alsace, but forgot to mention him before, as I did not keep a journal until I came to Paris. I always admired him, and was delighted to see him again. He lived in the hôtel Bouret, on the Place Vendôme, and his apartments were crowded from morning until night. His celebrated *baquet* attracted both court and city. There is not the least doubt but that he has performed innumerable cures; and no person can deny the effects produced by animal magnetism. Somnambulism, though still more extraordinary, is equally true. M. de Montjoy was cured of a serious disorder by M. Mesmer, and was so grateful that he published a pamphlet in support and praise of his system. Magnetism became quite the fashion, and like everything that becomes so, its effects were made to appear even more wonderful than they really were. After Mesmer, M. Leduc, M. Destin, Dr.

Thouvenet, and Dr. Deslon, were in their turn equalled and followed. Crowds waited on them, as if they believed that these men could renew youth, or retard age.

The duchess de Bourbon believed not only in animal magnetism, but also in sympathy and presentiments, of which latter she had some terrible ones about her brother.

"He will dishonour his family," she used to say; "I see it in my dreams. I cannot say all that I think, for I should only be considered mad; but I feel a presentiment that he will commit high treason, and perish on a scaffold."

The duchess often spoke of Martinez Pasquali, the chief of the illuminati, who has established a sect in Paris, which he visited in 1778. Her grace often went to hear him, and became a 'Martiniste,' or nearly so. She very often gave audience in her cabinet to M. de Saint Martin, author of 'Des rapports entre Dieu, l'homme, and l'univers.' This book has caused great excitement amongst the 'sects.' Is it not strange, that this century, so immoral, so philosophically boastful, and so sceptical, has, as it approaches its close, become not believing, but credulous, superstitious, and inclined to the marvellous. It is like an aged sinner who trembles at the thought of hell, and fancies that he repents because he fears.

Around, one can scarce see anything but sorcerers, adepts, prophets, and necromancers; and every one has visions, presentiments—and, strange to say, all are bloody, all threatening. What will be the latter years of this century, which was so brilliant at its commencement, during which so much has been written in proof of its Utopian theories of materialism, and which now can think only of the soul, and of its superiority over the body, and over instinct! I dare not think of it. All that an impartial person can or ought to do is, to lay before the world all they see, all they hear, and leave to posterity the decision that we cannot give. One cannot be at the same time judge and partizan.

For myself, I must say, that after all that I have seen of animal magnetism—and I have seen strange effects of it, which I will relate in their proper place—I say that after all that I have seen, I feel it impossible to doubt of its truth; and thousands of facts attest the equal certainty of somnambulism. I will copy here an epigram composed at this time, and which, compared to the verses I have quoted before, is not so bad:—

Le magnétisme est aux aboix,
  La faculté, l'académie
L'ont condamnée tout d'une voix
  Et l'ont couvert d'ignominie,

Après ce jugement, bien sage et bien loyal,
  Si quelque esprit original,
Persiste encore dans son délire
Il sera permis de lui dire
  Crois au magnétisme—animal!

As one may suppose, Mesmer received the duchess de Bourbon with great pleasure, and made several experiments for her especial gratification. We returned delighted with what we had seen, and could not speak of anything else during dinner. The duchess had this day another visit from the king of Sweden, who admired her turn of thought and expression very much. He did not leave until it was time for the opera, to which we also went, and had seats in Marshal Biron's box.

The count of Haga was the innocent cause of a great loss to the opera—that of the celebrated Vestris, who had only just returned from London, where he had sprained his ancle, and was not able to dance as had been expected for the entertainment of the king of Sweden; and the baron de Breteuil, minister of police, had him committed to 'La Force.'

"It is the first time that our house has quarrelled with that of Bourbon!" said Vestris II., or Vestris Allard, as he was called on account of his mother.

This, however, was not so insolent as the remark of his father, the 'Dieu de la danse,' who was then three years retired from the stage; he used often to say that there were but three great men in Europe—himself, Voltaire, and the king of Prussia!

The elder Vestris was married to Mdlle. Heinel; Vestris the second is only his natural son. The father was eighty at the time of which I write, and had been on the stage since he was four. They could say of the Vestris at the opera as was said of the Bourbons at Versailles—"The king is dead; long live the king!"

We afterwards went to see the opera 'Dido,' which has been very successful. The words are by Marmontel, and the music is considered the *chef-d'œuvre* of Piccini. The Gluckists were obliged to hold down their heads before the universal admiration it received. Mdlle. St. Hubertin was splendid in the character of Dido. She was at that time twenty-eight, and in all the splendour of her beauty. She wore a dress suited to the time represented by the opera, which was a great revolution in theatrical costume. No one could express more passionate sensibility, and at the same time preserve a more majestic and noble dignity.

"It is the acting of Clairon, and the voice of Todi," said one of the audience.

The king was so impressed by her acting,* that he granted her a pension unasked.

It was at St. Cloud that 'Dido' had been performed first, in the centre of that brilliant court, and before our charming and lovely queen. The goodness and generosity of Marie Antoinette are reflected on all that approach her, and the king is happy in the happiness of his people, whose pleasures are materially increased by the goodness of his heart and the simplicity of his manners. The entire of the preceding summer had been passed at Fontainebleau in the most delightful amusements and recreations. It was a brilliant sample of the happiness enjoyed by all France under such a king and queen. Each day seemed only to increase their desire to do good, but they have not been able to accomplish that noble purpose. Human passions are evilly inclined; and, alas! alas! free scope is given to them in the present day.

12*th June.*—The day of my presentation was a very important one for me: the ceremony is very fatiguing, though flattering; one is on view from morning until night, and does not get the least repose. This was only the eve; but I had to pay some preliminary visits, and feel the first agitations of this honourable distinction. I dined this day at Versailles, and after dinner I visited all the ministers, and all the 'honneurs.' This is the distinctive name of the ladies of honour, and of the mistress of the robes, of her majesty, and of the king's sisters. I have already told how, in the year 1782, whilst I was in Paris with the countess du Nord, the queen had the goodness to dispense with the ceremony of my presentation; but it was necessary that I should now think of preparing for this indispensable formality. My testimonials having been made out and examined by the genealogist, I was informed that the king and royal family had appointed half-past five in the evening of Sunday, 13th June, as the important moment. I had got a magnificent court-dress, an immense hoop, as was the court etiquette, and a 'bas de rofe,' which means a train not fastened to the petticoat. My dress was made at Baulard's, as Mdlle. Bertin would keep it too long. It was of gold brocade, embossed with flowers in their natural colours. There were not less than twenty-three yards of material, and the dress was tremendously heavy, which, however, did not prevent its being very handsome, and very much admired.

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* Mdlle. St. Hubertin was assassinated in London in the year 1812, at the same time as the count d'Entragues, whom she accompanied in his emigration, and to whom she was married in 1791.—*Editor's Note.*

The testimonials were to date from the year

1399, a date chosen because it was said that very few, if any, patents of nobility had been issued before that; and also because that it would be very difficult to get the original written proofs of family titles, as was necessary according to the regulations made on the 17th April 1760.

Louis XVI. has reserved to himself the power of accepting or refusing testimonials, and of deciding in all doubtful cases. Chérin, that is to say, the cabinet of royal orders, has only to verify the testimonials, or give an opinion; they are received, refused, or deferred, by the decision of the monarch.

This has nothing to do with the proceedings of the tribunal, nor can it in any way invalidate the authority of the 'king's council,' of the superior courts, of the judgments 'en maintenance de noblesse,' or of the royal commissioners charged with making inquiries or alterations in the nobility.

All these things are often subjects of personal favour, or disfavour, nor does it, in the slightest degree, lessen the claim to nobility of any family, that neglects appealing to the cabinet of the 'Saint Esprit,' if the testimonials have been admitted by any other tribunal.

The honours of the court are—being admitted to the queen's balls, to the assemblies, and hunts of the king. To be received, one must be of a 'knightly lineage,' that is, of a family that has not been ennobled ; and the direct filiation must be proved as far back as 1400, a date anterior to any nobility. These regulations do not apply to the descendants of the high officers of the crown, to ministers, secretaries of states, marshals of France, knights of the 'Saint Esprit,' or ambassadors. Other exceptions are made by *order*, or by *grace.* It was by order that I was admitted in 1782, because I had not time to get my testimonials made out, but at the same time I intended to enjoy this distinction afterwards by right, and not by *grace.*

Not to have any date from the commencement of nobility, is what is called going back to the night of time, which is the condition of all those who can prove a direct filiation to the year 1400. Those who can do this, have the privilege of *driving in the royal carriages.* Chérin has received the surname of the Incorruptible, from his inflexibility on this point.

The *honours of the court* must not be confounded with the *honours tout court,* or the *honours of the house.* The honours of the Louvre are reserved for titled ladies, such as duchesses, wives of Spanish grandees, and those who are called the '*king's cousins,*' or perhaps some other ladies, bearing some title, and whose families have possessed the hereditary honours of the Louvre.

These ladies have the privilege of the '*tabouret,*' may wear on their carriages an imperial of crimson velvet bound with gold, and may have a dais erected in their drawing-rooms. They have also the privilege of entering the court-yards of the royal châteaux, with four horses to their carriages, and of covering their coaches with black cloth, when the court is in deep mourning. The king kisses them on their being presented to him; and this is said to be a very disagreeable ceremony to Louis XVI.

Foreign princes, or Frenchmen on whom the title of prince has been bestowed, are not allowed the honours of the Louvre, and only rank after dukes. Is it not very strange that the Duke Louis de Wurtemberg, brother of a reigning duke, and his presumptive heir, should have no rank in the French court?

The princes of the house of Bourbon, even the cadets, take precedence of foreign princes and reigning dukes of the second order, and are considered the equals of all monarchs. They do not give the hand to any person. This was the wish of Louis XIV., and time has sanctioned the custom.

At the baron of Breteuil's, where I went before supper, I met the marquis de Castries, an old minister of war, and marshal of France for a year past: he was secretary of state for the naval department. He lived in Paris, Rue de Varennes. His son, the duke of Castries, is field-marshal: he had borne the title of count de Charbu, but was made duke in '84.

I was very well received by M. de Breteuil, who is a very intelligent and shrewd man, with a very sharp voice. He was minister of the royal household. He received the best and most agreeable society at his house—poets, men of learning, and even artistes. His suppers were celebrated, not only for their elegance, but for the witty conversation by which they were enhanced. I did not remain late, as I had to prepare for the next day.

13*th June.*—Immediately after dinner I had my hair dressed, very high, according to fashion, and ornamented with diamonds and a plume of feathers. I wore my earrings *en girandole.*

At half-past four, I went with the Baroness Mackan for the duchess de la Vallière, who had the goodness to undertake the charge of my presentation. We set out for the château, where I was first presented to the king. This was a very awful moment—so many persons looking on, and one so much afraid of being awkward, of forgetting the lessons one has received for walking backwards, kicking back the train, so that one may not become entangled in it and fall, which would be considered excessively awkward, and overwhelm the unfortunate delinquent with shame.

I made three reverences—one at the door, one in the centre, and a third immediately before the monarch. When I was presented to the queen, I took off my glove, and made an inclination as if to kiss the hem of her robe; but her majesty put back her dress with her fan, and said,

"I am very glad to see you, Madame d'Oberkirch, but this presentation is only a formality; we have been acquainted with each other a long time."

I bowed respectfully.

"Have you heard lately from your illustrious friend?"

"Her imperial highness often does me the honour of writing to me."

"Has she forgotten us?"

"The memory of the grand-duchess is as good as your majesty's; it would be impossible for you to forget each other."

The queen smiled, and then spoke to me of Alsace, Strasburg, and the Rhine, which she thought a magnificent river.

"I prefer it to the Danube;" said she, "but the Seine has made me forget them both."

After a few more words, the queen bowed, and we retired backwards, with the three curtsies of adieu. We had been presented with tabourets, but I did not sit, as I had not the right: the duchess de la Vallière sat, but had the politeness to rise immediately.

I was then presented to all the royal family, with the same ceremony. The king did not speak to me, but smiled graciously. His majesty seldom speaks to the persons presented to him, and is said to be very timid in the society of ladies. He did not kiss me; for that is a ceremony that he is only obliged to perform for duchesses, and *cousins of the king.*

After my presentation, I went to the 'Jeu de la Reine.' Here, all the ladies that have been presented sit on tabourets, without distinction of rank or title, whilst the gentlemen stand. The ladies that wish to play seat themselves round the large card-table, when the queen takes her place at it. After the game, the queen walked round the room, addressing a few words to each person.

"I hope that we will often see you again, Madame d'Oberkirch," said the queen, "and that you will not be too anxious to return to Alsace."

After making my curtsy I left the room, and went to visit the princess de Lamballes, *surintendante* of the queen's household, and then I again visited the '*Honours,*' as was the etiquette.

The prettiest person at the assembly this evening was the duchess de Guiche, daughter of Madame de Polignac: she shared in the affection which the queen bore her mother. She was at that time only sixteen, and had been a mother at fourteen and a month. The duke of Guiche was son to the count de Grammont, and had originally borne the title of count of Lonvigny: he was nephew of the duke de Grammont, and hereditary captain of the body guard. His brother, who had been at first chevalier, and afterwards count de Grammont, was married to the Countess Gabrielle de Brisgelin, canoness of Remiecourt. Amongst the guests was also the countess of Ossun, sister to the duke of Guiche, and mistress of the robes to the queen, who chose her afterwards for one of her intimate friends, and visited her every day when she was not well pleased with Madame de Polignac. The daughter of the countess d'Ossun became marchioness de Caumont Laforce. We had, besides, the viscountess of Polastron (Mdlle. d'Esparbes de Lussan), one of the queen's dames du palais; the countess d'Inigue, another dame du palais; the countess de Chalons, sister to the count of Andlau, whose mother was a Polastron: she is one of the most remarkable and beautiful women of the court, and is universally admired; she is equally witty and amiable.

Here is a list of the ladies who had the honour of being presented this winter, 1784:—

January	11.	The viscountess de Labourdonnaye.
„	18.	The princess de St. Mauris.
„	„	The countess de Luc.
„	„	The countess de Menon.
„	25.	The countess Felix de Pardieu.
February	1.	The duchess de Castres (she took a tabouret).
„	„	The duchess de Maille (she took a tabouret).
„	„	The viscountess Louis de Vergennes.
„	8.	The marchioness de Fouquet.
„	„	The countess de Carcado.
„	„	The duchess de Beauvron (who took a tabouret).
„	15.	The countess de Diella.
„	„	The baroness de Jumilhac.
„	29.	The viscountess de Blangy.
March	14.	The countess de Ruppière.
„	20.	The viscountess de Podenas.
April	18.	The countess d'Esterhazy.
May	9.	The duchess de Levis (took a tabouret).
„	„	The marchioness de Laval.
„	„	The countess Joseph de Ferronnays.
„	„	The countess de Suffren St. Tropez.
„	„	The countess de Valon d'Ambengear.
„	„	The countess de Vivray.
„	16.	The countess de Lous.
„	23.	The duchess de Caylus (took a tabouret).
„	„	The viscountess de Bethysy.
June	13.	The baroness d'Oberkirch.
„	„	The viscountess de la Bedoyère.
„	27.	The countess d'Estampes, wife of a Spanish grandee (took a tabouret).
„	„	The countess Edward de Marguerie.
July	4.	The marchioness de St. Hérem.
„	„	The marchioness de Baigercourt.
„	11.	The viscountess de Castellane.
„	18.	The duchess de Cosse (took a tabouret).

July 18. The countess de Bruyères Chalatre.
„ „ The marchioness de Coëtlogon.
„ „ The baroness de Dumas, &c.

I do not know the names of those presented after I left Paris; but they were published in the 'Gazette de la France.'

Whilst I was at the princess de Lamballes', the queen and the count of Artois came there. We were very pleasant. The count of Artois was greatly amused by a gentleman, who wished to flatter him by speaking of the siege of Gibraltar, of the count's glory, and of the great dangers he encountered.

"There was no glory there," said the count; "of all my batteries, the most effective was my *batterie de cuisine.*"

The abstemious Spaniards had been made ill by the refined cookery of the count's dinners.

"A *coulis d'écrevisses,*" said he, "becomes mortal poison to a man accustomed to eating only onions."

I had an adventure this evening that at first embarrassed me a little, but from which I had the good fortune to come off with honour. I wore on my arm a very handsome bracelet that had been given me by the countess du Nord, and the value of which was greatly enhanced to me by having her portrait in its centre. The queen noticed it, and asked me to show it her. I immediately opened my fan, to present the bracelet on it to her majesty, according to etiquette: this is the only occasion on which a lady can open her fan before the queen. My fan, which was of ivory, and wrought like the most delicate lace, was not able to bear the weight of the bracelet, which sank through it to the ground. I was in a very awkward position: the queen's hand was held out, and I felt that every eye was on me; but I think that I got out of the dilemma very well,—I stooped, which was very painful with my stiff petticoat, and picking up the bracelet immediately presented it to her majesty, saying—

"Will the queen have the goodness to forget me, and think only of the grand-duchess?"

The queen smiled and bowed, and everybody admired my presence of mind.

14*th June.*—I went to the court theatre to see the opera of 'Armida,' which was performed in honour of the king of Sweden. The duchess de Bourbon did me the honour of taking me to her own box. I was delighted: the opera was magnificent, the decorations splendid, and nothing could exceed the truth and fulness with which the conflagration of the magician's palace was represented. This piece had not been performed for four years. No person could equal Mdlle. Levasseur in the character of Armida: she had retired from the stage, but reappeared on this evening in honour of the count of Haga.

The theatre shone with jewels, flowers, &c., and the queen looked more than usually beautiful; and she was very well received, for she was then beloved: people had not yet begun to calumniate her, or, if they did, it was not publicly. The duchess de Bourbon suffered a great deal at being obliged, by her rank, to appear at these public exhibitions, where she was sure to see her husband. On this evening she was very much disturbed, and said to me, in a low voice,

"Alone! abandoned by father, brother, and husband, and every one. Oh! is it not a cruel fate?"

I could understand this sorrow—the most bitter, in my opinion, that a woman can feel—and women have many to bear.

15*th June.*—The duchess had brought me to Paris the evening before, and we both went this day to see 'Bagatelle.' She knew that the count of Artois would not be there; for it may be easily believed that, since the duel, she would not willingly meet him.

Bagatelle is a charming place. The pretty pavilion, or château, is surrounded by gardens *à l'Anglaise.* The grounds are traversed by a river that is supplied by force-pumps.

Mdlle. Arnould could not say of this,

"It is as like a river, as two drops of water."

It was better than that.

This reminds me of what the prince de Ligne said to Catherine II., who had a river that would suit the comparison of Mdlle. Arnould; and the prince often laughed at it, pretending to believe that the empress did not really mean it as a river. A workman was drowned in it one day, which piece of information the empress immediately made known to the prince, when next she saw him.

"What, madam! a man has been drowned in your river?"

"Yes, monsieur; what can you say to that?"

"The flatterer!" replied the prince de Ligne.

But to return to 'Bagatelle:' there were a great many bridges on the river—there were cottages, &c.—everything that imagination could suggest, as likely to sustain the original idea of the place. The park is exquisite; but the Parisians and foreigners profited more by it than its illustrious proprietors, who rarely walked in it. They sometimes dine or sup there, but never publicly; or at least with any lady from the court.

After having gone as far as Neuilly, we went to visit the duchess de Chartres. She spoke to us of her travels, and of the many persons she had met; amongst others she mentioned baron de Zuckmantel, with whom I was acquainted, and who was then ambassador from France to the republic of Venice. He had taken great pains to amuse the princess whilst she was at Venice, and had the good fortune to succeed.

"I remember," said the princess, "that he one day told a very amusing anecdote. The king asked, of how many members did the chamber of ten consist?"

"Of forty, sire," said he, immediately. But the king, fortunately, was attracted by something else, and did not hear him; but those standing near did, and it was soon known through all Versailles. The baron was the first to laugh at it himself—he had spoken without reflection.

16*th June.*—After visiting the countess of Hallwill, I went to Madame de la Galisière, whose husband was master of requests, governor of Lorraine, and had been governor of Alsace and counsellor of state. He had been the confidential friend of King Stanislaus. He was a man of great probity and correctness of judgment, but not brilliant. His temper was imperturbably calm.

One of his brothers is aide-de-camp to Marshal Saxe; and the youngest, the abbé de la Galisière, now bishop of St. Dée, was educated by the celebrated philosopher, Abbé Morellet, who was confined for some time in the Bastille, for having mentioned the name of the princess de Robecque in a pamphlet. He was member of the French academy. Voltaire was a great friend of his, and defended him with all his power against his enemies. He was nicknamed Abbé *Mord les.* (Bite them.)

This abbé is uncle by marriage to Marmontel, who is married to his niece, who has three sons and three daughters.

The elder, Mdlle. de la Galisière, is married to the marquis d'Escayrase Lauture, the second to viscount de Bufferant, and the third to the viscount d'Autichamp.

My next visit was to Madame Blair. This is a Scotch family. The first Blair that came to Alsace was M. Blair de Boisement, governor in the army of the marshal de Broglia. He was married to Mdlle. de Flesseller, and has a relation in the Alsatian army.

I went with the duchess de Bourbon, to the duchess de Chartres, with whom we were to visit the Palais Royal. We found there the cardinal Rohan, who was as infatuated as ever about Cagliostro, which was a great injury to his eminence, without counting the immense sums he has lost by this charlatan. This poor prelate seems to have a passion for doing himself harm, and preparing much misery for his future life.

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